University of Alberta

GENDER, NATIONALITY, AND SOCIALISM: WOMEN IN SOVIET WESTERN UKRAINE, 1939-1950

by

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Abstract

The 1940s were a decade of great turmoil and social upheaval for people in Western Ukraine. The decade witnessed the first Soviet regime in 1939-1941, German occupation in 1941-1944, the second Soviet regime from 1944, and finally the Civil War between the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (OUN-UPA) and the Soviet Army until the 1950s. This dissertation seeks to add fresh insights to the existing scholarship by placing it in a gender perspective: how did the Soviet state in Western Ukraine mobilize women in the socialist transformation? Based on the formerly inaccessible Soviet archival sources, this dissertation examines closely the activities of the Women's Departments of the Communist Party in Western Ukraine (*Zhinviddlily*) that attempted to mobilize the local Ukrainian women for the building of socialism.

Upon occupying the region in the wake of the Second World War, the newly arrived Soviet authorities had to mobilize women to build socialism as well as to dissociate them from their nationalist experiences. The Soviet state extensively used the slogan of gender equality and sponsored a variety of welfare programs, including health, children's allowance, and maternity leaves, even though, importantly, the rest of the Soviet Union had already gone through a retreat to social conservatism and traditional values, a process in which women became "double-burdened" in the High Stalinist and paternalist Soviet society. The work done by the women's departments formed an indispensable contribution to the socialist transformation of Western Ukraine, particularly with respect to the completion of the Fourth Five Year Plan. In this respect, the Soviet regime did manage to mobilize women for its socialist project.

However, the Soviet program of emancipation of women did not proceed as smoothly and straightforwardly as Soviet officials initially expected. Due to the heavy impact of the Second World War, the state realized that it simply could not provide adequate social services for its citizens, especially for female workers. Therefore, from the very beginning of the second Soviet regime, instead of providing comprehensive social programs and facilities, the authorities encouraged women's unpaid labour not only at home but in the workplace in a variety of forms. Moreover, in the hope of offsetting the huge human losses of the war years, the Soviet government launched a massive campaign to encourage women to have more children. These aspects of the Soviet program and their underlying ideology therefore did not liberate women from their patriarchal burden and, fundamentally, did not differ greatly from that of the Ukrainian nationalists, who, while recruiting young women for the underground partisan movement nonetheless attempted to limit women's place to that of the domestic sphere. Thus, ironically, for all the ideological differences and antagonism between Ukrainian nationalists and the Soviet regime, women living under both ideologies adopted a similar pattern of gender identity that combined the glorification of motherhood and work outside the home. The Soviet regime implemented its experiment of modernization through more drastic means and on a more extensive scale than its enemies, but in essence, both programs treated women as mothers, and both sought to impose male tutelage and guidance under a patriarchal guise.

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Over the years, many people have helped me to complete this dissertation, from supervisor to colleagues, family and friends. I owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to my supervisor, Professor John-Paul Himka, who provided guidance and help to me from the moment I arrived in Edmonton in 1995. His advice, good humour, and professionalism made it an honour and a joy to work with him. Without his supports, I could not have completed this dissertation. I am also grateful for the other members of my committee, Professor Susan Smith, Professor Serhii Prokhy, Professor Natalia Pylypiuk, and Professor Hiroaki Kuromiya, for their time and comments.

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Fellowship in Ukrainian History and Political Sciences (University of Alberta) made my research trip to Ukraine possible.

In Ukraine, I was kindly helped by many colleagues and staff at the Institute of the Historical Research at the L'viv University. The assistance and hospitability I received from the Institute's staff was unforgettable. I would also like to express my gratitude to all the librarians and archivists in Ukraine who assisted me to locating the relevant materials. While I acknowledge the help and support of all the people and organizations, the ideas and arguments presented in this dissertation are my own. As well, all shortcomings and mistakes are mine only.

Lastly, but not least, I wish to thank my family.

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Abbreviations and Glossary

DALO	Derzhavnyi arkhiv L'vivs'koi oblasti (State Archive of L'viv Oblast) L'viv, Ukraine DALO, f.-R : documents from DALO DALO, f.-P : documents from DALO's separate division, the former Party Archive of the L'viv Oblast Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine
TsDAHO	Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi arkhiv hromads'kykh obiednan' Ukrainy (The Central State Archive of Public Organization of Ukraine), Kyiv, Ukraine
TsDAVO	Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi arkhiv vyshchykh orhaniv vlady i derzhavnoho upravlinnia Ukrainy (The Central State Archive of the Highest Organs of State Government and Administration of Ukraine) Kyiv, Ukraine

f.	fond. (collection)
op.	opys (inventory)
spr.	sprava (file)
ark.	arkush (folio)

kolkhoz(y)	collective farm(s)
kolkhoznitsa	female workers at kolkhoz
komsomol	Communist Youth League
miskom	city party committee
oblast	province, region
obkom	provincial party committee
obshchestvennitsa	wives' movement
raion	district
raikom	district party committee
stakhanovite	workers exceeding their allocated norms of output

zhenotdel(y) (zhenskii otdely in Russian) zhinviddil(y) (zhinochi viddily in Ukrainian)	Women's Department(s) of the Communist Party
zhensovety(y) (zhenskii sovet in Russian) zhinrada (-dy) (zhinocha rada in Ukrainian)	Women's Council(s)

Introduction

In the late 1980s, under Mikhail Gorbachev's *perestroika* and *glasnost*, women's groups and feminist organizations began to form in many parts of the Soviet Union, attracting women from diverse social, professional, and ethnic backgrounds. These groups voiced their concerns about the growing economic crisis and reduction in social welfare benefits. They also publicly criticized the systemic discrimination against women existing in all areas of life in Soviet society despite the state's official claim that the "woman question" in the Soviet Union had been resolved once and for all and that Soviet women enjoyed equality with men. In non-Russian republics, some women's organizations grew out of broad national independence movements and popular fronts, while others fashioned themselves as revived versions of the women's organizations that had existed in the pre-Soviet period.

In the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, one such organization, founded in 1989, claimed to be the heir of *Soiuz ukrainok* (Union of Ukrainian Women), which operated in Western Ukraine from 1917 to 1939, until the region's incorporation into the Soviet Union.[1] The re-established *Soiuz ukrainok*, though based in the city of L'viv, the historical and cultural capital of Western Ukraine, aimed to become a national organization, establishing branches in other Ukrainian cities. Its leaders asserted that Ukrainian women had been the guardians of the home, national language, and morality, and had participated in the struggle for Ukrainian statehood. Its program was dominated by a national, rather than a feminist agenda, emphasizing the preservation of the Ukrainian culture and language.[2] According to the leading American authority on Ukrainian women, this reference to the interwar women's organization "drew the new women's movement into the historical framework of Ukraine and legitimized it as patriotic activity."[3]

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[1] L. O. Smoliar, ed., *Zhinochi studii v Ukraini: zhinka v istorii ta s'ohodni* (Odesa: Astroprynt, 1999), p. 182.

In a climate of upheaval stemming from nationalist agitation, cultural revival, and the reinterpretation of history from a specifically Ukrainian perspective, the women's movement also took part in the public commemoration of the past in order to advance a revised history that gave them legitimacy through association with past renowned women's groups. At the end of 1990, just a year before Ukraine's independence, *Radians'ka zhinka* (*Soviet Woman*), the only official Soviet women's magazine in the Ukrainian language, reprinted the anthem of *Soiuz ukrainok*,[4] thereby associating itself with the organization's legacy. The historical basis and legitimacy of new women's organizations became a point of contention when, in 1994, the two largest women's groups, *Soiuz ukrainok* and *Zhinocha hromada Rukhu* (Women's Community of Rukh), each celebrated, separately, the centenary of the *Tovarystvo rus'kykh zhinok* (Society of Ruthenian Women), a women's organization founded in

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[2] Solomea Pavlychko, "Between Feminism and Nationalism: New Women's Groups in the Ukraine," in Mary Buckley, ed., *Perestroika and Soviet Women* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 91.

[3] Martha Bohachevsky-Chomiak, "Women in Ukraine: The Political Potential of Community Organization," in Zvi Gitelman, Lubomyr Hajda, John-Paul Himka, and Roman Solchanyk, eds., *Culture and Nations of Central and Eastern Europe: Essays in Honour of Roman Szporluk* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), p. 33.

[4] *Radians'ka zhinka*, no. 12 (1990), pp. 2-3.

1884 in the Western Ukrainian city of Stanyslaviv by Natalia Kobryns'ka, the "first Ukrainian feminist."[5] This competition to win the status of the legitimate heir of the Union of Ruthenian Women clearly gave credibility to the canonization of what once had been a women's group in the Western Ukrainian, or Galician, countryside, then became designated as "bourgeois nationalist" during the Soviet era, and now is celebrated in post-Soviet Ukrainian historiography as the "first feminist" organization in Ukraine.

The late Solomea Pavlychko, a feminist literary critic in post-Soviet Ukraine, herself born in L'viv, strongly believed that the Ukrainian feminist movement was born in Western Ukraine and that the first Ukrainian feminists were Natalia Kobryns'ka, Ol'ha Kobylians'ka, Olena Pchilka, and Lesia Ukrainka.[6] Kobryns'ka and Kobylians'ka were from Western Ukraine. Pchilka and Ukrainka, mother and daughter, were from Eastern Ukraine, but both women's literary activities were closely related to the women's movements of Western Ukraine. Pchilka collaborated with Kobryns'ka in her efforts to publish a women's magazine in Western Ukraine. Ukrainka and Kobylians'ka, as Ukrainian modernist writers, influenced each other and cherished a close friendship. What is surprising is the recent growing interest and scholarship on these women. Particularly, Ol'ha Kobylians'ka has attracted attention from both historians and literary critics. A series of new critical articles, including ones by Pavlychko, recently appeared in both Ukraine and Western countries.[7]

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[5] Solomea Pavlychko, "Feminism in Post-Communist Ukrainian Society," in Rosalind Marsh, ed., *Women in Russia and Ukraine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 309.

[6] Solomiia Pavlychko, *Feminizm* (Kyiv: Osnovy, 2002), p. 238.

Current interest and treatment of these women in post-Soviet Ukrainian society appear to be an attempt to construct a cult of these women as a sort of Ukrainian counterpart of Alexandra Kollontai or Nadezhda Krupskaia in Russia. The elevation of these women to the status of national feminist leaders, equivalent to Alexandra Kollontai, may seem as an exaggeration. Nonetheless, given the recent scholarly trend within Ukrainian women's historiography toward the search for famous women leaders in the country's own history, it is understandable.[8] Caught up in the revival of interwar women's organizations, growing interest in *fin de siècle* Ukrainian feminist literature, and even nostalgia for the Habsburg Empire, few seem to pay attention to the fact that the region of Western Ukraine had also experienced socialism for half a century. In a climate dismissive of any Soviet experience, in particular the Soviet project of "women's emancipation" which allegedly created for Ukrainian women the "double burden" of work and household duties, the topic of Ukrainian women's experience during the Soviet era, especially with respect to Western Ukraine, the birth place of the Ukrainian national and feminist movements, does not attract much scholarly inquiry. Most scholars, both in the West and in Ukraine, discredit Soviet policies toward women, claiming that the totalitarian Soviet regime did not institute these policies for the sake of women's own interests. Is it that simple, however? Can we just ignore the Soviet period of Ukrainian history and assume that the legacy of the women's movement in Western Ukraine was so strong that it simply transcended the Soviet period?

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[7] Pavlychko, *Feminizm*; Tamara Hundorova, "Ol'ha Kobylians'ka contra Nitsshe, abo narodzhennia zhinky z dukhu pryrody," in V. Aheieva and S. Oksamytna, eds., *Gender i kul'tura, zbirnyk statei* (Kyiv: Fakt, 2001): 43-52; Maxim Tarnawsky, "Feminism, Modernism, and Ukrainian Women," *Journal of Ukrainian Studies*, vol. 19, no. 2 (Winter 1994): 31-41.

[8] For example, see L. P. Shumrykova-Karahodina, *Vydatni zhinky Ukrainy i ikhnii vnesok u rozvytok natsional'noi i svitovoi nauky: druha polovyna XI - seredyna XX st.* (Dnipropetrovs'k: Vydavnytstvo Dnipropetrovs'koho universytetu, 1999); O. Luhovyi, *Vyznachne zhinotstvo Ukrainy* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1994).

When Soviet Ukraine, especially in Western Ukrainian region, was swept up by the growing dissident movement in the 1960s and 1970s, Western historians and political scientists attempted to analyze what impact the incorporation of Western Ukraine into the Soviet Union exerted on the rest of Ukraine (Eastern Ukraine).[9] Did the incorporation of nationally conscious Western Ukrainians strengthen Ukrainian national distinctiveness within the USSR? These scholars focused on the possibility that the Western Ukrainians might have exerted their strong national influence upon their compatriots in Eastern Ukraine through the migration of workers and exchange of students. Furthermore, their examination of the postwar Soviet press and the use of language in Western Ukraine revealed that the Ukrainian-language press remained a vital presence in Western Ukrainian society, indicating that the region retained a strong Ukrainian national consciousness and may not be following the pattern of Russification, as was the case in Western Belorussia, also incorporated into the Soviet Union in 1939.[10] While scholars could not offer conclusive answers in the 1970s, given the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of an independent Ukraine in 1991, their arguments positing Western Ukraine as an area exerting a strong Ukrainian national influence on the rest of the country gained a certain credibility.

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[9] Yaroslav Bilinsky, "The Incorporation of Western Ukraine," in Roman Szporluk, ed., *The Influence of East Europe and the Soviet West on the USSR* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1976): 189-228; Ivan L. Rudnytsky, "The Soviet Ukraine in Historical Perspective," *Canadian Slavonic Papers* vol. 14, no. 2 (Summer 1972): 244-248.

[10] Roman Szporluk, "West Ukraine and West Belorussia: Historical Tradition, Social Communication, and Linguistic Assimilation," *Soviet Studies* vol. 31, no. 1 (January 1979): 76-98.

This argument tempted us to ask whether we could formulate a similar question from a gender specific perspective -- what influence did Soviet gender policies exert on women in Western Ukraine? At first glance, the answer to this question seems to be self-evident. The Communist Party completely destroyed the pre-war women's movement in Western Ukraine, accusing its members of "bourgeois nationalism," and relied largely on non-Ukrainian women for the region's industrialization and agricultural collectivization. Contrary to the Soviet leaders' assurance of a better life for women in a communist state, this promise was never realized in Western Ukraine. This is considered by many scholars to be obvious, and, thus, Soviet gender policy in Western Ukraine is usually not deemed worthy of serious inquiry. Instead, most scholarly interest and attention in recent years, in particular in the early 1990s, has been directed to the pre-and-post-Soviet periods.[11]

However, it eventually became clear that despite the euphoria of national independence and the development of autonomous women's movements, the democratic creation of women's groups in many post-socialist countries did not result in the emergence of a mass, grassroots women's movement akin to those in Western Europe. Many scholars gradually came to realize that it was misguided to impose an expectation of Western feminist activism on women who had lived under state socialism for decades, and this realization has led them to attempt to understand the very different life and environment of these women. In so doing, they have ceased avoiding serious examination of past socialist policies with respect to women, and have sought to integrate women's experience in the Soviet period into the larger history of feminist and women's movements in this region from the late nineteenth century. For example, one scholar proposes that the paradigm of the "double burden," to be more fully and realistically understood, must be placed within the broader historical context of East European history, in which women usually were required to perform both agricultural labour and motherly duties and had very few alternatives available to them.[12] In this light, the "double burden" that is considered by most historians to have been the result of Soviet gender policies in fact appears to have been at least in part a continuation of older, well established patterns of women's daily activities.

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[11] In the 1990s, several studies on the women's movements in Western Ukraine before 1939 appeared. Borys Savchuk, *Zhinotstvo v suspil'nomu zhytti Zakhidnoi Ukrainy, ostannia tretyna XIX st. – 1939 r.* (Ivan-Frankivs'k: Lileia-NV, 1998); Oksana Rybak, "Istoriohrafiia ta istoriosofiia ukrains'kykh zhinochykh studii," *Zapysky naukovoho tovarystva im. Shecvchenka*, no. 233 (L'viv, 1997): 100-125; idem, "Pershi zhinochi orhanizatsii u Skhidnii Halychyni i Pivnichnii Bukovyni," *Ukraina v mynulomu*, vol. 1 (Kyiv-L'viv, 1992): 101-112; V. A. Peredyrii, "Chasopys 'Zhinocha dolia' iak dzherelo doslidzhen' rozvytku zhinochoho hromads'koho rukhu v Halychyni," *Zapysky L'vivs'koi naukovoi biblioteky im. V. Stefanyka*, vol. 1 (1992): 63-68; idem, "Tvory khudozhn'oi literarury na storinkakh chasopysu 'Zhinocha dolia', 1925-1939," *Zapysky L'vivs'koi naukovoi biblioteky im. V. Stefanyka*, vol. 2 (1993): 18-23.

One existing empirical study points to the complexities of gender issues in post-Soviet society. In 1994, the Institute of Historical Studies in L'viv conducted a survey of national identities among the residents in two Ukrainian cities, L'viv and

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[12] Maria Todorova, "Historical Tradition and Transformation in Bulgaria: Women's Issues or Feminist Issues?" *Journal of Women's History* vol. 5, no. 3 (Winter 1994), p. 134.

Donets'k.[13] When given a choice of only three identities (Ukrainian, Russian, and Soviet), the common assumption turned out to be true, that is, the overwhelming majority in L'viv chose their identity to be Ukrainian, while in Donets'k, the centre of the most industrialized and Russified Donbas region in Eastern Ukraine, Soviet identity was the predominant choice. However, when given a selection of as many as twenty-eight identities, the identity marker of "women" placed in the third rank in L'viv, after Ukrainian and L'vivite. In the case of Donets'k, the identity of "women" hailed at the second rank next to the category of "Donetskite." Surprisingly, the identity label of "men" received a low ranking in both cities. What does this high ranking of female identity mean? Did L'viv women's strong identity originate from their pre-Soviet historical past? If so, how do we explain an even stronger self-identification of women in Donets'k, where there seems to have been no obvious history of a women's movement? Although the survey does not explain why gender identity ranked so high in both cities, this puzzle serves as a starting point for this dissertation. The survey acknowledges that even the people of L'viv, the least Sovietized city of the Soviet Union, could not escape the fifty-year Soviet legacy. Despite the L'viv population's strong anti-Soviet sentiments and memories of the non-Soviet historical past dating from Habsburg and Polish times, they still appear to have shared some Soviet social values, and the differences between L'viv and other cities in this area are likely more imagined than real.[14] Or perhaps, were women's identities equally emphasized in the Soviet and nationalist projects?

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[13] Yaroslav Hrytsak, "National Identities in Post-Soviet Ukraine: The Case of Lviv and Donetsk," in Zvi Gitelman, Lubomyr Hajda, John-Paul Himka, and Roman Solchanyk, eds., *Culture and Nations of Central and Eastern Europe: Essays in Honor of Roman Szporluk* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000): 263-281.

In keeping with these arguments and questions, this dissertation attempts to examine what experiences and legacy the Soviet Union brought to the women of Western Ukraine. I will approach this question by focusing on the early years of the Soviet period, from 1939, when the region was first incorporated into the Soviet Union according to the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact, to 1950, the end of the Fourth Five Year Plan, when the region's socialist economic and social transformation was for the most part completed. During this period, the people of Western Ukraine experienced the first Soviet regime during 1939-41, German occupation during 1941-44, the second Soviet regime, and a civil war between Ukrainian nationalist guerrillas and the Soviet forces from 1944. This dissertation hopes to add new insights to the existing scholarship by examining this period through a gender perspective. How did the new Soviet regime in Western Ukraine mobilize women for the socialist project? To what extent was gender difference exemplified in Stalinist political practices during the first years of Soviet Western Ukraine?

The mobilization of Western Ukrainian women in the postwar era has not always been a neglected theme among historians. Soviet historians have produced several studies on the building of socialism in Western Ukraine, mainly focusing on the region's collectivization and economic achievements. Works from the 1970s often contain, albeit in passing, a brief overview of women’s experience as an integral part of Western Ukraine’s socialist transformation.[15] The Soviet scholars described the organizational role of the Communist Party in attracting women to the building of socialism through their participation in collectivization and politics. Some scholars studied the topic in depth, producing dissertations on it.[16] Their heavily Soviet doctrinaire interpretations notwithstanding, these works often provided valuable factual data for this dissertation.

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[14] Hrytsak, p. 276.

Western historians, though largely without access to archival sources, have already produced many valuable studies on Stalinism in Ukraine and the Ukrainian national movement, some specifically focusing on Western Ukraine at the time of the

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[15] For example, Ie. V. Safonova, *Ideino-vykhovna robota Komunistychnoi partii sered trudiashchykh vyzvolenykh raioniv Ukrainy v roky Velykoi Vitchyznianoi viiny, 1943-1945 rr.* (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo Kyivs’koho universytetu, 1971), pp.163-165; O. A. Kirsanova, *Rozvytok suspil’no-politychnoi aktyvnosti trudiashchykh zakhidnykh oblastei URSR u protsesi budivnytstva osnov sotsializmu* (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1981), pp. 146-158. A. Kondratiuk, *Ideino-politicheskaia rabota partiinykh organizatsii v period sotsialisticheskoi perestroiki zapadnoukrainskogo sela, 1944-1950 gg.* (L’viv: Vydavnytstvo L’vivs’koho universytetu, 1972), pp. 96-97.

[16] L. M. Bakhmatova, “Diial’nist’ partiinykh orhanizatsii zakhidnykh oblastei Ukrainy po zaluchenniu zhinok-selianok do kolhospnoho budivnytstva, 1945-1950,” *Ukrains’kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, no. 10 (1969): 49-55; Iu. M. Trofymiak, “Diial’nist’ Komunistychnoi Partii Ukrainy po zaluchenniu zhinok zakhidnykh oblastei do aktyvnoi uchasti v hromads’komu zhytti, 1944-1950 rr.,” *Visnyk L’vivs’koho universytetu* (1968): 54-59; idem, “Dobir i vykhovannia kerivnykh kadriv z aktyvu zhinok, na materialakh zakhidnykh oblastei URSR, 1946-1955 rr.,” *Naukovi pratsi z istorii KPRS*, no. 37 (1970): 123-130; N. D. Bondarchuk, “Hromads’ko-politychna i trudova aktyvnist’ zhinok Izmail’shchyny, 1944-1952 rr.,” *Ukrains’kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, no. 3 (1984): 95-102; Nina Petrovna Shevchenko, “Uchastie zhenshchin v sotsialisticheskikh preobrazovaniiakh v zapadnykh oblastiakh Ukrainy, 1939-1950 gg.” (L’vov 1989); idem, “Borot’ba za likvidatsiiu nepys’mennosti i malopys’mennosti ta pidvyshchennia zahal’noosvitnioho rivnia zhinok zakhidnykh oblastei Ukrainy, 1945-1950,” *Ukrains’kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, no. 6 (1983): 105-112. I would like to thank Dr. Shevchenko for sharing her candidate dissertation with me in the summer of 2000.

Second World War.[17] Although none of them specifically examines women, this dissertation benefited substantially from their research. As archival sources became accessible in the 1990s, historians in both Ukraine and the West have begun to look at the topic of Stalinism in Western Ukraine from a new angle, attempting to conceptualize the complex and ambiguous relations between Stalinist power politics and Western Ukrainians. Their studies range from the relations between the Western Ukrainian intelligentsia and the Soviet regime, the emigration of the Western Ukrainian and Polish intelligentsia to Soviet Ukraine, the liquidation in 1939-1941 of Ukrainian cultural institutions, to the Stalinist repressions in Ukraine: the famine, deportations, and the dekulakization.[18] In addition, one study focuses on gender issues in the Ukrainian nationalist underground.[19]

Such a situation of growing scholarship on Stalinism in Western Ukraine, however, stands in contrast to the situation in the field of gender and women's studies in post-Soviet Ukrainian academia. As mentioned, with the absolute rejection of the Soviet past, post-Soviet Ukrainian women's historiography offers only a cursory, if any, look at the Soviet period.[20] The only previous published Western scholarly treatment of Ukrainian women, Martha Bohachevsky-Chomiak's pioneering *Feminists despite Themselves* (1988), is limited in its approach and sources, and ends its discussion in 1939, at the point where this dissertation begins.[21] Bohachevsky-Chomiak's work nevertheless remains a necessary starting point for any subsequent work, including this dissertation. My study of Western Ukrainian women during the Soviet period attempts to bridge the gap between the two most widely studied periods, the interwar Western Ukraine and post-Soviet Ukraine, thus hoping to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of women's history in Ukraine.

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[17] John A. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 3rd ed. (Englewood, CO: Ukrainian Academic Press, 1990); Yaroslav Bilinsky, *The Second Soviet Republic: The Ukraine after World War II* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1964); Jan Gross, *Revolution from Abroad: Soviet Conquest of Poland's Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); David Marples, *Stalinism in Ukraine in the 1940s* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1992); Roman Szporluk, ed., *The Influence of East Europe and the Soviet West on the USSR* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1976).

[18] O. S. Rubl'ov and Iu. A. Cherchenko, *Stalinshchyna i dolia zakhidnoukrains'koi intelihentsii: 20-50 - ti roky XX st.* (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1994); Ivan Bilas, *Represyvno-karal'na sytema v Ukraini, 1917-1954: suspilno – politychnyi ta istoryko –pravovyi analiz* (Kyiv: Lybid' and Viis'ko Ukrainy, 1994).

[19] Jeffrey Burds, "Gender and Policing in Soviet West Ukraine, 1944-1948" *Cahiers du Monde russe,* vol. 42, no. 2-4 (avril-décembre 2001): 279-319.

While this dissertation should be situated among other studies of Soviet women, it also provides a useful corrective to the existing scholarship. In recent decades, much scholarly work has been undertaken on Soviet women.[22] The main question of this scholarship on Soviet women has been whether the Soviet regime succeeded or failed in its attempts to liberate women. For women in the Soviet bloc, most scholars argue, equality meant "a double burden": in a paternalistic society, women worked outside the home to keep the family alive, and inside the home to look after the children. Soviet policies concerning women indeed affected all Soviet women, but their implementation, practice, and impact varied in such a diverse, multiethnic society as the Soviet Union. However, scholars have focused largely on Russian women, under the presumption that Russian women's experience would suffice for understanding women in the non-Russian borderlands, paying little attention to such an important factor of identity as ethnicity. Questions of gender, on the one hand, and ethnicity and nationality, on the other hand, have emerged as particularly fruitful avenues for research, but the two intersect only rarely. Except for a few excellent works, women of non-Russian nationalities in the former Soviet Union remain woefully under-studied.[23] The existing works reveal that the Soviet state attempted to use women's oppression as an important tool to draw Muslim women away from their traditional Islamic culture and society, efforts which eventually created a terrible dilemma, and had disastrous results, for the women themselves. Research on Soviet Central Asia shows that, depending on the particular historical circumstances, strong national or religious allegiance could not be easily eliminated by the Sovietization campaign. In Western Ukraine, the situation was similarly complicated. Unlike the general Soviet pattern or even that in Eastern Ukraine, links with pre-Soviet experiences and traditions were inescapable there. The

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[20] Smoliar, p. 182. One post-Soviet candidate dissertation on the post Second World War Ukrainian women's mobilization completely omits Western Ukraine: Tat'iana Viktorovna Zhytkova, "Problemy zhenskogo truda i byta v usloviiakh vostanovleniia narodnogo khoziaistva Ukrainy, 1944-1950 gg." (Odessa, 1992).

[21] Martha Bohachevsky-Chomiak, *Feminists despite Themselves: Women in Ukrainian Community Life, 1884-1939* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1988).

[22] On women in Russian and Soviet history, see Mary Buckley, *Women and Ideology in the Soviet Union* (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989); Richards Stites, *The Women's Liberation Movement in Russia: Feminism, Nihilism, and Bolshevism, 1860-1930* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978); Barbara Alpern Engel, "Engendering Russia's History," *Slavic Review*, vol. 51, no. 2 (Summer 1992):309-321; Barbara Evans Clements, *Daughters of Revolution: A History of Women in the USSR* (Arlington Heights, IL: Harlan Davidson, Inc. 1994).

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[23] For the studies on gender and nationality, see Gregory Massel, *The Surrogate Proletariat: Moslem Women and Revolutionary Strategies in Soviet Central Asia, 1919-1929* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974); Douglas Northrop, "Subaltern Dialogues: Subversion and Resistance in Soviet Uzbek Family Law," *Slavic Review*, vol. 60, no. 1 (Spring 2001):115-139; Paula A. Michaels, "Motherhood, Patriotism, and Ethnicity: Soviet Kazakhstan and the 1936 Abortion Ban," *Feminist Studies*, vol. 27, no. 2 (Summer 2001): 307-333.

Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and Ukrainian nationalism were two influential factors in the region, both of which were suppressed in the immediate postwar years.

I argue that the diversity and varying nature of Soviet gender issues were further complicated in Western Ukraine, where, by the interwar period, women had already been exposed to the strong influence of Western-style feminism and Ukrainian nationalism, one of the strongest nationalist ideologies in East Central Europe in the twentieth century. Upon occupying the region in the wake of the Second World War, the newly arrived Soviet state launched a "delayed" women's emancipation, some twenty years later than in the rest of the Soviet Union. Under the slogan of gender equality, the Soviet authorities sponsored welfare programs to mobilize women for the socialist transformation of economy and society, as well as to dissociate them from their interwar "bourgeois" feminist and nationalist experiences, despite the fact that the rest of the Soviet Union had already retreated to social conservatism and traditional values. This dissertation attempts to demonstrate that a view from the non-Russian periphery not only offers fresh insight into the lives of Soviet women under Stalinism but also emphasizes what is often neglected in this field: that Soviet society was indeed multiethnic.

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This dissertation is based primarily on documents from four Ukrainian archives. The State Archive of L'viv Oblast (DALO) houses both the archives of L'viv oblast administrative bodies (DALO-R) and the archives of the former Communist Party oblast committee (DALO-P). The most useful sources for this dissertation are the reports by the Women's Departments of the Communist Party (*zhinviddily*) that were created within the eight Western Ukrainian oblast party committees.[24] I have studied these reports in L'viv (DALO-P) and the former Central Archive of the Communist Party of Ukraine, now called the Central State Archive of Public Organization of Ukraine (TsDAHO) in Kiev. Other archival sources such as the reports by Ministries of Health and Education were obtained from the Central State Archive of the Highest Organs of State Government and Administration of Ukraine (TsDAVO) in Kiev. Several published collections of archival documents on the collectivization and socialist construction in Western Ukraine were indispensable references for this dissertation. I also made use of a variety of newspapers, women's magazines, autobiographies, and literary sources.

The first chapter examines the historical development of Western Ukraine before 1945. It outlines the political, economic, and social situation in the region, with particular focus on women, until 1939. After a brief overview of the socialist experiment's effect on Russian and Soviet women since the Russian Revolution to the Second World War, it discusses the first encounter of Western Ukrainian women with the Soviet regime during the brief period of 1939-1941. It attempts to compare the early developments in Western Ukraine with the rest of the Soviet Union. Chapters two through five, the main body of the dissertation, deal with the postwar

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[24] The territory of Western Ukraine comprises the provinces (oblasts) of Volhynia, Drohobych, L'viv, Rivne, Stanyslav, Ternopil', Chernivtsi, and Transcarpathia. Drohobych oblast was incorporated into a part of L'viv oblast in 1954 and Stanyslav oblast was renamed Ivano-Frankivsk in 1962. This dissertation retains the old name of Stanyslav and treats Drohobych as a separate region throughout the period of 1939-1950.

Soviet period. Chapter two examines the formation and activities of women's organizations, the women's departments of the Communist Party (*zhinviddily*) and women's councils (*zhinrady*), each of which usually have been associated with ones in the Soviet Union in the 1920s and in the 1970s, respectively. I compare the differences and similarities between these women's organizations in postwar Western Ukraine and the ones appearing in the rest of the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1970s. Chapter three takes up women's participation in the labour force. It examines how women in Western Ukraine were involved in the postwar Fourth Five Year Plan of 1946-1950, in which Western Ukrainian cities, including L'viv, became major industrial centers. Chapter four examines Soviet gender policies, particularly those towards mothers and children, from a comparative perspective. Using feminist theoretical concepts such as "gendered welfare state" and "maternalism," this chapter opens up a new way to study the strategies of Soviet family policy and problematizes the validity of these theoretical concepts in terms of the study of Stalinist gender policies. The final chapter takes up the various representations of women on the pages of the Soviet press in 1939-1950. The tenor of the representations gradually evolved from concern over women's lower status in society to fears and anxieties about the potential effects of the changing gender relations on marriages. Who was going to take care of the children if wives were working outside the home? Once the joy of the unification of all Ukrainian lands and women's emancipation had subsided, Western Ukrainian intellectuals began to realize that they lacked a clear definition of gender relations, and thus demonstrated women's extremely insecure and vulnerable situation.

By analyzing the first years of the socialist experiment in Western Ukraine from a gender perspective, my dissertation not only reveals a more complicated picture of Stalinist gender policies in this non-Russian region but, additionally, offers a key to the understanding of post-Soviet Ukrainian women, who are now said to be subjected to a backlash stressing women's maternal and domestic responsibilities for the nation's betterment.

Chapter One

Women in Western Ukraine and in the Soviet Union Prior to 1945

Western Ukraine before 1939: An Overview

Western Ukraine, the geographical framework of this dissertation, which comprises a total area of 110,600 square kilometres or more than one-sixth of the territory of present-day Ukraine, is usually understood as the region that was incorporated into the Soviet Union as a part of the Ukrainian SSR in the wake of the Second World War. However, this definition hardly conveys the region's historical and geopolitical complexities, and, in fact, when one examines the region's history prior to the late eighteenth century, there is little validity in treating the Western Ukraine as a single unit of historical analysis.[1] Western Ukraine contains five major historical and geographical regions, Galicia, Bukovyna, Transcarpathia, Polissia and Volhynia, each one of which experienced long periods of unique historical development until they ultimately came to be known as Western Ukraine in the modern era.

Galicia occupies the most important place among all of the Western Ukrainian lands. The history of Galicia dates back to the tenth century when the medieval kingdom of Kievan Rus' extended its realm of power into the eastern foothills of the Carpathian Mountains. The Principality -- later Kingdom -- of Galicia-Volhynia inherited much of the heritage of Kievan Rus' and reached the height of its power in the thirteenth century. Prince Danylo, the most outstanding ruler of the Principality, built and named his capital city L'viv after his son, Lev, in 1256. The gradual shrinking of Galicia-Volhynia was accelerated by the rise of the neighbouring states of Lithuania, Poland and Muscovy. By the end of the fourteenth century, Galicia came under the rule of the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth, which in the eighteenth century was partitioned by Russia, Prussia, and Austria. Together with Galicia, a small region of Northern Bukovyna that had long been held by the Ottoman Empire also came under the rule of Austria. In the nineteenth century, Galicia and Bukovyna benefited from the enlightened absolutism of the Habsburg Empire and there emerged a highly developed national culture and political life, in which the Greek Catholicism, an influential religion in Western Ukraine, played a major role.[2] The city of L'viv became a major cultural and political center for Ukrainians and by the turn of the twentieth century. It hosted the headquarters of all kinds of Ukrainian societies and institutions, schools, newspapers, political parties, intellectual societies, cooperatives, and women's organizations. Western Ukraine's progress contrasted markedly with Eastern Ukraine under the Russian Empire to which the region of Volhynia belonged and in which the ruling Russian Empire placed harsh restrictions on the public usage of the Ukrainian language.

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[1] John-Paul Himka, "Western Ukraine in the Interwar Period," *Nationalities Papers* vol. 22, no. 2 (1994): 347-363. For Western Ukraine before the modern era, see Orest Subtelny, *Ukraine, A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988).

Transcarpathia, located at the western edge of the Carpathian Mountains, had been a part of the kingdom of Hungary since the medieval era. After the *Ausgleigh* of

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[2] See John-Paul Himka, *Galician Villagers and the Ukrainian National Movement in the Nineteenth Century* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1988); idem, *Religion and Nationality in Western Ukraine: The Greek Catholic Church and the Ruthenian National Movement in Galicia, 1867-1900* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999).

1867, the region became a part of the autonomous Hungarian section of the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy. The mountainous environment and oppressive Hungarian rule (Magyarization) isolated the region from the developments occurring in other Ukrainian lands. As a result, the Transcarpathian Ukrainian people were among the most politically, socio-economically, and culturally underdeveloped of all Ukrainians. Nonetheless, they developed a particular form of national identification -- Russophilism and Rusynophilism -- and neither of these ideological orientations saw their people as "Ukrainian."[3]

As a result of the collapse of the Habsburg Empire in 1918 and the defeat of the national revolution's attempt to unite Eastern and Western Ukraine in 1917-1920, Galicia came under the control of the newly independent Polish state. In addition, as a result of the Polish-Soviet War, the territories of Volhynia and Polissia from the former Russian Empire were also incorporated into Poland; thus "Western Ukraine" became larger than it had been under the Habsburg Empire. Transcarpathia was transferred to Czechoslovakia, also a newly created state, while Romania acquired Bukovyna. Eastern Ukraine became "the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic," a part of the Soviet Union. Exclusion from Soviet political life, particularly during the most virulent Stalinist years in the 1930s, made the Western region a distinct political, social, and cultural unit. Western Ukrainians continued to fight for national autonomy while being fiercely persecuted by the Polish authorities, and they eventually created a radical, right-wing nationalist ideology emphasizing selfless dedication and patriotic volunteerism for the sake of national independence.[4]

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[3] For analysis of Russophilism (identification with the Russian people) and Rusynophilism (identification with the Rusyn people), see Paul R. Magosci, *The Shaping of a National Identity: Subcarpathian Rus', 1948-1914* (Cambridge, 1978); Ivan L. Rudnytsky, "Carpatho-Ukraine: A People in Search of Their Identity," in Ivan L. Rudnytsky, *Essays in Modern Ukrainian History* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1987), pp. 353-373.

Women in Galicia developed a considerable degree of cohesion in their pragmatic community movement which, although not explicitly feminist, involved educational and cultural activities, day care programs, a cooperative movement, a women's press, and the defense of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. As the clergy of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church had been the leading force of the Ukrainian national revival in the nineteenth century, the embryonic women's movement in Galicia evolved out of the activities of clerical families. Clerical families established mutual aid societies to alleviate the hardship suffered by widows and orphans of clergymen. The first Ukrainian women's organization, *Tovarystvo rus'kykh dam* (Society of Ruthenian Ladies), was formed in 1878 in close connection with the Church. Mostly women from clerical families, the members of the Society were not directly interested in women's issues or rights. Instead, they engaged in church-related philanthropic works, such as running a dormitory for girls who attended high schools or training courses and organizing fund-raising dances.

It was Natalia Kobryns'ka who carried the women's movement a step further and challenged traditional society by establishing a separate and secular women's organization. Born into a family that produced a priest, a female physician, and a member of the Austrian Parliament, Kobryns'ka grew up in a highly intellectual atmosphere and developed her literary talent and aspiration for social activism despite her lack of formal learning or higher education. Under the mentorship of Ivan Franko, the greatest activist and thinker in the region, Kobryns'ka became deeply involved in the Ukrainian women's movement. She was a leading force in establishing a women's association, *Tovarystvo rus'kykh zhinok* (Society of Ruthenian Women) in 1884 in Stanyslaviv. Kobryns'ka's major goal was the assertion of women's right to higher education, which was attacked by her opponents who regarded such a claim as a threat to the sanctity of the family. Many of her ideas were ahead of their time, and she was not always appreciated. She advocated not only the institutionalization of household responsibilities to alleviate women's household burden by establishing day care centres and communal kitchens, but also universal suffrage for women. As these demands were not accepted by her contemporaries, both men and women, she instead devoted herself to educating women through the publication of a women's magazine. With the help of Ivan Franko, Kobryns'ka published the first women's almanac, *First Wreath (Pershyi vinok)*, and prominent female writers such as Olia Kobylians'ka and Olena Pchilka collaborated with her. Branches of the society and affiliated organizations were formed in other parts of Western Ukraine.[5]

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[4] On the Ukrainian nationalist ideology and movements, see John A. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism*; Jeffrey Burds, "Agentura: Soviet Informants' Networks and the Ukrainian Underground in Galicia, 1944-1948," *East European Politics and Societies* vol. 11, no. 1 (1997): 89-130.

During the interwar period, the Ukrainian women's movement matured and flourished. *Soiuz ukrainok* (Union of Ukrainian Women) was the largest and most successful women's organization in Western Ukraine, operating from 1921 to 1938. Under an outstanding leadership, including Milena Rudnyts'ka, who was elected to the Polish parliament and became an accomplished politician and conscious feminist who defended the existence of a separate women's organization for the betterment of the Ukrainian nation,[6] *Soiuz ukrainok* became a politically conscious mass women's organization that involved women from all social classes in the region. At its height, the organization encompassed about 50,000 members.[7] Its branches and affiliates stretched into other parts of Western Ukraine and even as far as North America, to which, by the early twentieth century, thousands of Ukrainians had emigrated.

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[5] Bohachevsky-Chomiak, *Feminists despite Themselves.*

As most of the Ukrainian population consisted of small landholders and landless peasantry, the notions of the cult of domesticity, middle-class values, or ladies' philanthropic activities had little relevance for most women. Instead, because so many women had to rely on each other for their everyday needs, cooperative movements for trading dairy products were particularly successful and constituted the main part of women's organized undertakings. In Western Ukraine's agricultural society, women were responsible for the cattle and poultry, whose products provided the co-ops with most of their commodities. The cooperative movements also educated women about other cultural and political activities. Although leaders of the movements were well read in Western feminist literature, they neither openly applied Western feminism to the women's movement nor called themselves "feminists." Instead of calling for equal rights for men and women, they stressed motherhood and emphasized the socializing role of mothers and their active participation in community life, in which women's right to work outside the home was considered an essential element.[8] This Ukrainian women's movement -- often described as pragmatic feminism -- was comparable to relational feminism in nineteenth-century Europe in that its advocates adhered to the concepts of a unique womanly nature, especially as mothers, and a sexual division of labour in both the family and society, but sought to dismantle patriarchal institutions and restructure society.[9] The aim of the Ukrainian women activists was to modernize mothers from the bottom up, not through the means of the state, which was not an option for a stateless Ukrainian people.

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[6] Milena Rudnytska, "Ukrainian Reality and the Task of Women," in Ralph Lindheim and George S. N. Luckyi, eds., *Towards an Intellectual History of Ukraine: An Anthology of Ukrainian Thought from 1710 to 1995* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996): 284-286.

[7] Bohachevsky-Chomiak, *Feminists despite Themselves.*

While, traditionally, the Ukrainian women's movement developed in close conjunction with the Ukrainian national movement and directed women's energy to the needs of the national movement, their relationship was at times characterized by differences and a level of tension. During the interwar period, as the Ukrainian national movement gradually evolved into a radical right-wing nationalist movement that emphasized selfless dedication and patriotic voluntarism for the sake of national independence, Ukrainian women often found themselves uncomfortable with this creed. While some, particularly young women, chose to devote themselves to the underground rebel movement as patriotic martyrs, others were discouraged by the nationalists' paternalistic treatment of women. Rudnyts'ka, who believed that there was no contradiction between Ukrainian national liberation and feminism, still outspokenly opposed the nationalist ideology that sought to limit women's role to that of the bearer of children and domesticity, living under male tutelage.[10] Therefore, many Ukrainian women distanced themselves from the male nationalists' political struggles and tried instead to maintain their autonomous community networks.

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[8] *Milena Rudnyts'ka: statti, lysty, dokumenty,* Marta Bohachevs'ka-Khom'iak, ed., (L'viv: Misioner, 1998), pp. 227-230.

[9] On the definition of relational feminism, see Karen M. Offen, *European Feminisms, 1700-1950: A Political History* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000).

Shortly before the arrival of the Soviet regime, *Soiuz ukrainok* was dissolved by the Polish government which considered it politically dangerous.[11] The leaders of the movement emigrated to Western Europe and North America, where they continued to organize Ukrainian women.

Women in the Soviet Union

In the early twentieth century, women in the Soviet Union underwent the most tremendous transformation in the history of women. Based on Marxist ideology, the Soviet government committed itself to the "emancipation of women," which involved the incorporation of women into wage labour, the democratization of the patriarchal family, the communalization of housework, and the elimination of gender-based discrimination. The Soviet achievements in the policies towards women in the first decades of Soviet era were, indeed, impressive. The Soviet government abrogated all earlier legislation subordinating women and then proclaimed new political, economic, and family codes, thus guaranteeing women's equal rights in all spheres of life. A new Soviet Constitution in 1918 declared women's political equality with men. The

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[10] Rudnytska, "Ukrainian Reality and the Task of Women," p. 285; *Milena Rudnyts'ka: statti, lysty, dokumenty,* pp. 655-660.

[11] Martha Bohachevsky-Chomiak, "Ukrainian Feminism in Interwar Poland," in Sharon L. Wolchik and Alfred G. Meyer, eds., *Women, State, and Party in Eastern Europe* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1985): 82-97.

Family Code issued in the same year proclaimed women's legal equality, removed marriage from the church jurisdiction and made it a civil procedure, made divorce obtainable at the request of either spouse, and forbade discrimination against illegitimate children. The underlying goal of the Family Code was that of turning marriage into a free union of equal citizens based purely on love, so that the family unit would eventually wither away. Abortion became legal in 1920 if performed by a physician. This was accompanied by a series of laws to improve women's position in the labour force. The Land Code in 1922 ensured women's rights to an equal share of peasant household property. Protective labour laws were also codified.[12] The Soviet welfare program contained initiatives ranging from hygiene, health, and education to children's allowances and maternity leaves. Alexandra Kollontai, the most famous female Bolshevik dedicated to women's emancipation, was instrumental in codifying these welfare programs for women in her role as head of the Commissariat of Social Welfare.[13] She was also a leading force in another aspect of the revolutionary program: an attempt to organize a separate women's organization and to mobilize all women to support the Bolshevik Party and participate in a new program for women. The Women's Department of the Communist Party (*zhenotdel*) was born in 1919, and Kollontai, together with other leading female Bolsheviks, engaged in what they called

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[12] Wendy Goldman, "Women, the Family, and the New Revolutionary Order in the Soviet Union," in Sonia Kruks, Rayna Rapp, and Marilyn B. Young, eds., *Promissory Notes: Women in the Transition to Socialism,* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1989): 59-81.

[13] There are several studies on Alexandra Kollontai. See Cathy Porter, *Alexandra Kollontai: The Lonely Struggle of the Woman Who Defied Lenin* (New York: The Dial Press, 1980); Beatrice Farnsworth, *Aleksandra Kollontai: Socialism, Feminism, and the Bolshevik Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980); Barbara Evans Clements, *Bolshevik Feminist: The Life of Aleksandra Kollontai* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979); idem, *Bolshevik Women* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

"work among women." The zhenotdel organized a series of public meetings to educate women about the aims of the new regime, worked towards the elimination of illiteracy, established a network of day cares, kindergartens and communal dining rooms, provided a rehabilitation program for prostitutes, took care of war orphans, and trained factory workers. The zhenotdel also organized national and local women's conferences that often brought together hundreds of delegates from all over Russia, and outspokenly declared their determination to achieve women's emancipation. The zhenotdel activists were sent to talk to women in villages and factories in many parts of the Soviet Union, including Islamic Central Asia, where women were particularly subordinate. When collectivization began, the zhenotdel workers helped to build some kolkhozy made up exclusively of women, one of which was named after Anna Artiukhina, the last head of the zhenotdel.

Despite its successes, from its very beginning zhenotdel's activists were faced with numerous problems. As happened to other party organizations in the early Soviet years, it was not clear whether the zhenotdel was independent from or subordinate to the Department of Agitation and Propaganda, from which it received funding. Nonetheless, its members did their best to realize their dream of emancipating women. Due to the zhenotdel's uncertain status vis à vis the Department of Agitation and Propaganda, its lack of funding and staff, and, most of all, the continuous sexist and misogynistic attitude from the Party leadership, particularly among lower ranking officials in the countryside, the organization was never able to accomplish more than a fraction of its ambitious plans.[14]

Furthermore, while the zhenotdel activists touched the lives of millions of women in cities as well as in the countryside with their sincere efforts, evidence of which was felt at the successful national and provincial women's conference with millions of participants, they encountered tremendous difficulties in their attempts to send their message to non-Russian women. Among the people in Islamic Central Asia, traditional society and values remained stronger than in Russia.[15] In particular, women continued to live as they had for centuries, with arranged marriage, bride-price, the marriage of young girls to adult men and giving birth to many children and nurturing them at home. The seclusion of women from public life, polygamy, and veiling in public places also remained widespread. The degree of Muslim women's subordination to men often horrified the zhenotdel workers sent from Moscow. The Soviet government made efforts to use Muslim women's oppression as an important tool to draw Muslim women away from their traditional culture and society, and it was to this end that the zhenotdel organized a public demonstration on the International Women's Day in 1927 in Uzbekistan. Together with political speeches, poetry, and movies, the demonstrations reached their climax when thousands of Muslim women tore off and burned their veils in public, a symbolic representation of the repudiation of women's subordination to the traditional culture, which zhenotdel workers from Moscow considered a great success. This action outraged Muslim men and brought disastrous results for the women themselves. Angry men went on a rampage, beating, raping, and even killing hundreds of unveiled women as well as zhenotdel workers. Clearly, strong national and religious allegiance could not be easily eliminated by the Soviet campaign in this region, where religious beliefs, sexual mores, and family structures were deeply rooted phenomena that evolved slowly over time and proved extremely difficult to change by outside force.

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[14] For a recent comprehensive study of the activities of zhenodel, see Elizabeth Wood, *The Baba and the Comrade: Gender and Politics in Revolutionary Russia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997).

[15] For the activities of zhenotdel in Central Asia, see Shoshana Keller, "Trapped between State and Society: Women's Liberation and Islam in Soviet Uzbekistan, 1926-1941," *Journal of Women's History,* vol. 10, no. 1 (Spring 1998): 20-44.

As Stalin came to power, the Soviet government began to adopt new attitudes and policies towards women and their role in the society. In an atmosphere of Stalinism's general retreat in the direction of social conservatism and traditional values, by the end of the 1930s, the early Soviet commitment to women's emancipation gradually gave way to a neoconservative socialist patriarchy, in which a woman's responsibility to domesticity took precedence over her civic obligations. She worked outside the home to keep the family alive and inside the home to look after the children and husband, thus carrying a "double burden." Moreover, consumer products were scarce, adding to her difficulties. Such "New Soviet Women" differed from the one envisaged by the zhenotdel.

In 1930 the Politburo eliminated the zhenotdel as a part of a larger reorganization and amalgamation of several departments in the Central Committee. The report of the Central Committee explained that "women's work was dissolved in general work and women's issues subsumed under the larger, and more important, campaign for industrialization and collectivization," therefore separate women's departments were no longer necessary.[16] In addition to the liquidation of the zhenotdel, the 1936 Family Code also symbolized the onset of the Stalinist era. It adopted a pronatalist position by banning abortion with the exception of cases in which the continuation of a pregnancy threatened the woman's life, making divorce a much more difficult and expensive procedure, and providing financial aid to women with many children.

Scholars have long discussed whether such Soviet programs of liberating women constituted a success or a failure. Some have argued that, despite the Bolshevik leadership's apparent failure to end women's inequality, the Bolsheviks' motives were "genuine," while others have concluded that the Bolshevik efforts on behalf of women were largely "instrumental" in an attempt to increase the work force as part of the country's overall modernization process. Some even argue that the so-called "death of the proletarian women's movement" did not happen with the illegalization of abortion in 1936 or the abolition of the Women's Section in 1930, but much earlier. They argue that economic factors under the New Economic Policy were the main reason why the Bolsheviks ceased to speak of the "withering away of the family."[17]

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[16] Wendy Goldman, "Industrial Politics, Peasant Rebellion and the Death of the Proletarian Women's Movement in the USSR" *Slavic Review*, vol. 55, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 46-77. After the liquidation of the zhenotdel, "the work among women" continued in the form of the *zhensektor* ("women's section"), and, in the non-Russian republics, the zhenotdel and delegates' meetings are said to have continued throughout the Second World War, although to date no major study of their work has emerged. Richards Stites, *The Women's Liberation Movement in Russia: Feminism, Nihilism, and Bolshevism, 1860-1930*, p. 400

[17] For the interpretation of "genuine" see Stites, *The Women's Liberation Movement in Russia: Feminism, Nihilism, and Bolshevism*. For the "instrumentalist" interpretation see Gail Warshofsky Lapidus, *Women in Soviet Society: Equality, Development, and Social Change* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978) and Wood, *The Baba and the Comrade: Gender and Politics in Revolutionary Russia*.

In the 1930s, another type of women's organizational movement appeared, which exemplified Stalinist society in the 1930s. The obshchestvennitsa movement was a wives' movement in which mainly housewives were organized through their husbands' workplaces and work status and urged to engage in a variety of socio-cultural, often wifely, activities.[18] They cleaned workers' dormitories and canteens, improved the quality of workers' food and nutrition, checked the standards of nurseries and kindergartens, and beautifully decorated gardens and hospitals. The movement originally began among urban housewives whose husbands worked in industry, usually in prestigious positions, but gradually it spread from urban factories to the countryside. Although their activities had to conform to the party line, the women activists often made their own decisions, took the initiative without the guidance of the party or trade unions, and considered the social work they carried out to be their own achievement. In the process, these women gained a sense of self-fulfillment. Scholars have argued that the discourse involving the obshchestvennitsa closely resembled the maternalist discourse in Western countries -- a woman performed a service to the state by caring for her husband and children, but her official identity was based on her "dependency" on a husband who earned a family wage. Thus, the obshchestvennitsa movement in the 1930s contrasted with Kollontai's zhenotdel in the 1920s that aimed toward economic independence and political emancipation of women.[19] Yet, a wives' volunteer movement in the late 1930s was not only a part of the reestablishment of traditional female values, but also part of the coexistence of officially sanctioned domesticity and women's public service outside the home. Women's lives and their status in Soviet society became even more fragmented as the regime's control over society was relaxed during the war.

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[18] There are several studies on the *obshchestvennitsa* movement: Thomas G. Schrand, "Soviet `Civic-Minded Women' in the 1930s: Gender, Class, and Industrialization in a Socialist Society," *Journal of Women's History*, vol. 11, no. 3 (Autumn 1999); 126-150; Mary Buckley, "Untold Story of Obshchestvennitsa in the 1930s," *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol. 48, no. 4 (1996): 569-586; Idem, "The Soviet 'wife-activist' down on the farm," *Social History*, Vol. 26, no. 3 (October 2000): 282-298; Rebecca Balmas Neary, "Mothering Socialist Society: The Wife-Activists' Movement and the Soviet Culture of Daily Life, 1934-41," *Russian Review*, vol. 58 (1999): 396-412.

The Second World War profoundly altered women's lives and self-perceptions, family life, and social mores. As millions of men went into the military, women took the places of men in industry and agriculture. The image of women changed dramatically, reflecting changing circumstances and the state's desires. The pre-war image of housewifely women, homemakers, and mothers stood in sharp contrast to the image of tough, resolute and heroic women, working like men, that was promoted immediately after the German invasion in the summer of 1941. Such women's images emphasizing women's independence and assertiveness were clearly reflected in the iconography of the war, and Soviet women became central figures in rallying public support for the war efforts to defend "Mother Russia" from invaders. By 1944-1945, however, the state was gradually trying to foster a more traditional set of family values. This newly re-developed representation of women contradicted reality, however, as women's importance in the economy and in heavy industry had continued almost unchanged toward the end of the war. Women constituted half of the labour force; the farms were virtually taken over by women; women also came to constitute the majority of physicians and school teachers. The contradiction between the newly reinstalled traditional female image and the reality of women's working positions was clearly revealed in the press and in official propaganda posters.[20]

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[19] Neary, p. 400. As Minister of Social Welfare, Kollontai insisted that equal rights for women were not incompatible with special treatment for mothers and argued for special measures to encourage fertility, but scholars in the West have discussed her importance in women's emancipation in the Russian Revolution primarily in terms of her advanced ideas on the nature of sex relations under communism and women's economic independence. Lapidus, p. 62.

When the Soviet Union annexed Western Ukraine in 1939, shortly before the Second World War began, gender relations in the Soviet Union can be best characterized as Stalinist neoconservatism. As a new socialist regime, the Soviet state had launched the building of socialism, but by 1939 the Soviet Union had already retreated to overall social conservatism and traditional values, and all existing women's organizations had already been abolished.

The First Soviet Regime in 1939-1941

The Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact on 23 August 1939, which shocked the world and precipitated the Second World War, changed the fate of people in Western Ukraine forever. Based on the secret provisions that were to divide Poland between the two powers, the Soviet Army crossed the Polish eastern border on 17 September and annexed the Polish eastern territories -- which became known as Western Belorussia and Western Ukraine. The Soviet authorities proclaimed that they came to protect the national minorities in Poland, particularly Belorussians and Ukrainians.

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[20] For example, see Victoria Bonnel, "The Peasant Woman in Stalinist Political Art of the 1930s," *American Historical Review*, vol. 98, no. 1 (February 1993): 55-82; Elizabeth Waters, "The Female Form in Soviet Political Iconography, 1917-1932," in Barbara Evans Clements et al., eds., *Russia's Women: Accommodation, Resistance, Transformation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991): 225-242; Pat Simpson, "On the Margins of Discourse? Visions of New Socialist Women in Soviet Art, 1949-1950," *Art History*, vol. 21, no. 2 (June 1998): 247-267.

On 22 October, the Soviets organized elections to the People's Assemblies for Western Belorussia and Western Ukraine and skilfully managed both regions' petitions for admission to the Soviet Union. The People's Assembly of Western Ukraine was held in L'viv and the request of the unification of Western Ukraine with the Ukrainian SSR was approved. In December, a Soviet decree abolished the Polish administration system (*voivodships*) and introduced the Soviet provinces (*oblasts*) of Volhynia, Rivne, L'viv, Drohobych, Stanyslav, and Ternopil'. In June 1940, at the same time as the annexation of the three Baltic states, Soviet troops marched into Romanian territory and annexed northern Bukovyna and Bessarabia, which became Chernivtsi and Izmail oblasts, respectively.[21] The region of Transcarpathia, where Carpatho-Ukrainians greatly improved their lives under the democratic Czechoslovakian government during the interwar period and eventually achieved an autonomous state in 1938, was again incorporated into Hungary and remained under Hungarian rule throughout the war years.

Historian Jan Gross claims that the overwhelming majority of the Ukrainian population was sincerely glad to see the collapse of the Polish state, in which the Ukrainians suffered the policy of ethnic discrimination.[22] However, the Soviet claim that the Red Army soldiers were welcomed by the local population was an exaggeration, and the Western Ukrainians soon realized that the Soviet regime was no less repressive than the Polish state. During its twenty-one months of rule in the area -- until the German attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941 -- the Soviet government implemented in Western Ukraine a series of new experiments in all spheres of life, in which women too were involved. The Soviet policies during this brief period were characterized as a drive to "win the hearts and minds" of the population.[23] At first, the Soviet power introduced the relatively tolerant policies of the Ukrainianization that occurred in Eastern Ukraine in the 1920s, and some policies were indeed welcomed by the local Ukrainians. Ukrainian became the official language of Western Ukraine, and the educational system and academic institutions were Ukrainianized. Jan Kazimierz L'viv University was Ukrainianized and renamed in honour of Ivan Franko. Ukrainian newspapers and publications increasingly appeared. Land holdings of the Polish landlords were confiscated and redistributed to the peasantry, followed by collectivization.[24]

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[21] In fact, Soviet-occupied Bessarabia was divided into a Ukrainian-inhabited area (Izmail oblast in Ukrainian SSR) and a Romanian-inhabited area that was included in Moldavian SSR. In the postwar years, Izmail oblast became part of Odessa oblast. Izmail had belonged to the Russian Empire, but Bukovyna had never been under the Russian Empire or the Soviet Union.

[22] Gross, p. 31.

Along with these reforms, however, came the more repellent aspects of the Soviet regime. All of the Ukrainian political parties and cultural institutions that were active during the interwar period were disbanded, the result of which was that nationally conscious Western Ukrainians were eventually left with only one viable political organization – the underground network of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). The Greek Catholic Church came under fierce attack by the

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[23] Orest Subtelny, "The Soviet Occupation of Western Ukraine, 1939-1941: An Overview" in Yury Boshyk, ed., *Ukraine during World War II: History and Its Aftermath, A Symposium* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1986): 5-14.

[24] However, the large-scale collectivization did not occur until the late 1940s. See Marples, *Stalinism in Ukraine in the 1940s*.

Soviet state. The nationalization of education deprived the Church of its network of private schools, seminaries, gymnasiums, student residences, orphanages, kindergartens, and nurseries. All capital and commercial properties held by the Church were confiscated and nationalized, and religious practices were banned from schools.[25] In accord with the separation of church and state, the Soviet law eliminated the validity of religious marriage, and gave legal status to civil marriage only, and set up a local registry bureau (ZAGS) -- just as had happened in 1918 under the Soviet Family Code. Many Ukrainian leaders fled westward to German-occupied Poland or other parts of Western Europe. In addition, a wave of deportations and arrests swept across the lands. Initially beginning with influential local politicians and intellectuals, it would soon include any individuals suspected of anti-Soviet attitudes, including women and children, regardless of ethnic origin.[26] Within less than two years, as a result, several hundred thousand Jews, Poles, and Ukrainians in the military, political, economic, religious and cultural spheres were deported from Western Ukraine to Siberia and Soviet Central Asia.[27] Industry was nationalized. The "Branka" Confectionary factory in L'viv, which employed a large number of female workers, was renamed in honour of the late Russian Bolshevik leader Sergei Kirov. Collectivization began and closely followed the process pursued in the Soviet Union in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

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[25] For a comprehensive analysis of the Soviet attack on the Greek Catholic Church during 1939-1950, see Bohdan R. Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State (1939-1950)* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1996).

[26] While most of the arrested persons were adult males, the majority of deportees were women and children. For the exiled Polish women, see Katherine R. Jolluck, "You Can't Even Call Them Women: Poles and 'Others' in Soviet Exile during the Second World War," *Contemporary European History*, vol. 10, no. 3 (2001): 463-480.

[27] Estimates of the population losses in Western Ukraine vary greatly. High estimates place the number of deportees at 1 or 1.5 million, while the other studies offer 400,000.

In terms of Soviet policies towards women in Western Ukraine, did the Soviet authorities have a coherent plan for transforming their lives? Given the poor state of Soviet archives for the period 1939-41, it is difficult to construct a complete picture of the situation of women during this period. According to the available sources, the Soviet regime appears to have followed the practice that it had carried out in the rest of the Soviet Union during the 1920s. The most important difference from the Soviet Union of the 1920s, however, was that in 1939-41 Bolshevik authorities did not institute a special organization specifically targeting women such as women's departments (zhenotdely) had been in the 1920s. During the postwar years, zhenotdely were introduced in Western Ukraine and functioned as a mobilizing force for women in the Sovietization of Western Ukraine. But why did the Soviets not create them in 1939? While a definite conclusion cannot be drawn, some speculation is possible. Nine years had passed since the notorious liquidation of the zhenotdel. Since then, Soviet gender politics were transformed dramatically. In the course of disbanding Ukrainian institutions that existed during the interwar years, including women's organizations, the Soviet authorities may have had good reason not to institute a separate women's organization. The Soviet women's organizations of the 1920s were never clearly defined and could once again cause a debate over the "separatism" fostered by separate party work among women. Although it did not create women's organizations, the Soviet administration used its position as a liberator of Western Ukraine from the "Polish yoke" to implement its program of "emancipation of women" including a commitment to promote women in all spheres of life, from politics to industry and collectivization. A speech given by a forty-three-year-old woman at a women's conference in Chernivtsi, displays the Soviets' intention in this regard: "I went to Moscow as a delegate and saw with my own eyes that women in the Soviet Union have equal rights to men everywhere. I saw women as aviators, mechanists, factory directors. We are and will no longer be like we were under Romania. We were used to being told that women should stay at home, take care of children, and cook in the kitchen." [28]

The Soviet authorities emphasized the differences from the interwar period with all available resources. Soon after the arrival of the Soviet Army in September 1939, a women's magazine, *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy*, reprinted the Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov's radio address on the arrival of the Red Army. [29] In the following issues, the magazine bombarded readers with articles about Western Ukrainian women and their joyous reunion with Eastern Ukraine. The magazine emphasized the hardship and difficulties women experienced in Poland. Mykola Petrovsky, a leading party historian in Kiev, wrote a short article in *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy*, outlining the history of the Western Ukrainian lands from the Kievan Rus', Polish and Habsburg eras to 1939. Petrovsky emphasized the capitalist exploitation of land and people in Poland and the oppression of Ukrainian culture and language, and stated that fifty-four percent of the population in Western Ukraine was illiterate, of which sixty percent were women.[30]

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[28] *Suspil'no-politychnyi rozvytok zakhidnykh oblastei URSR, 1939-1989: Zbirnik dokumentiv i materialiv* (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1989), p. 40.

[29] *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy*, no. 17-18 (1939), p. 1.

Political rights and participation have been one of the main focal points in women's movements in the modern era, and the Soviet regime in Western Ukraine made great efforts to encourage women to actively participate in the new political life, no matter how manipulative it was. During a brief period of less than two years, there were as many as five elections. The first, and the most significant, election was the one to the National Assembly of Western Ukraine, held on October 22, 1939. The candidates were carefully chosen from the local population and they constituted a single bloc of "party and nonparty." Newspapers periodically ran a series of articles dedicated to the biographies of candidates and opinions of candidates' neighbors and supporters expressing their support of the candidates.

Yet, the election campaign involved much confusion. The local candidates, particularly women, were often taken from villages without any qualifications or appropriate knowledge concerning their duties. This was due to the lack of time available to choose appropriate candidates and train them. A girl from Drohobych, for instance, was chosen as a candidate, but when she stood in front of a crowd at an electoral campaign meeting, she became bewildered and ran off the stage in tears crying, "why do they bother me, what do they want from me?"[31] Such instances occurred all over Western Ukraine. Even if the authorities could select satisfactory candidates, exemplary Soviet citizens who could be relied upon to be sympathetic to the Soviet platform, the question of whether they were supported by the local population posed another challenge. Candidates often had criminal records: as communists, many had served time in Polish jails during the interwar period. After the Red Army's arrival, these political prisoners were released as heroes and heroines, and many other prisoners also claimed to have been jailed as a result of the political persecution pervasive in capitalist Poland. Helena Kuz'mins'ka, a vice-director of the Kirov confectionary factory, was one of a mere 218 females among 6,288 nomenklatura in L'viv oblast.[32] Other women, such as Mariia Kikh, Mariia Soliak, and Kateryna Savchuk, all described as excellent activists and elected as deputies to the People's Assembly or Supreme Soviet, were female candidates with criminal records.[33] This resulted in confusion as it became difficult to distinguish common criminals from former political prisoners.[34] In the end, out of 1482 deputies elected to the People's Assembly of Western Ukraine, 239 were women. Afterwards, 66 delegates were sent to Moscow to attend the Fifth Extraordinary Session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and to present their request for incorporation into the Soviet Union and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.[35] Although it is not known how many female delegates were included, *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy* detailed the joyous trip. In it, numerous female delegates such as Mariia Kikh, who would become the chair of a women's department in the postwar years, and Mariia Soliak were extensively covered by the women's magazine, a topic discussed in Chapter Five.

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[30] *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy,* no. 17-18 (1939), p. 4.

[31] Gross, *Revolution from Abroad*, p. 89.

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[32] *Suspil'no-politychnyi rozvytok zakhidnykh oblastei URSR, 1939-1989*, p. 28.

[33] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 1 March 1940, p. 6

[34] Gross, *Revolution from Abroad*, p. 90.

[35] *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy*, no. 20 (1939), p. 7; no. 24 (1939), p. 7.

The next election to choose delegates to the Supreme Soviet was held on March 24, 1940. Among the candidates there were many who had already served in the People's Assembly in October 1939. The election was preceded by a two-month preparatory campaign, and it was closely connected to the International Women's Day celebrations (March 8), the first instance of this celebration by women in Western Ukraine.[36] Meetings exclusively for women were organized and participants were encouraged to exercise their political rights as an "equal member in society" by participating in the coming election to the Supreme Soviet and Republican Supreme Soviet.[37] At another meeting, a female physician from eastern Ukraine asserted in a speech that under the Soviet regime women had equal rights to men and benefited from free education to such an extent that it was even possible to become a physician.[38] In the end, all the candidates scored electoral victories. Twenty-seven deputies to the Supreme Soviet were elected from the Western Ukrainian oblasts. In L'viv oblast, there were two females out of seven deputies: Wanda Wasilewska, one of the most prominent Polish intellectuals to move to the Soviet Union since 1939, and Mariia Perepelytsia, a librarian from a Ukrainian peasant background. Both women, as well as the other three women who were elected to the Republican

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[36] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 8 March 1940, p. 1.

[37] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 20 March 1940, p. 2.

[38] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 22 March 1940, p. 1.

Supreme Soviet from L'viv oblast, had already served as deputies to the People's Assembly six months earlier.[39]

Along with the policies of mobilization of women into politics and the economic sphere with the goal of guaranteeing women's independence and equality, the role of women as mother and wife was emphasized. The Soviet state instituted a network of health and social services in Western Ukraine by opening children's homes and women's clinics, increasing the number of beds, and sending in physicians and medical personnel from Eastern Ukraine. In accordance with the pronatalist drive that the Soviet state had pursued since 1936, the media periodically reported on the improvement of medical and social services for mothers and children, and sent messages that women thus did not have to resort to abortions and could have as many children as they chose.[40] In newspaper articles, mothers were repeatedly quoted as saying how happy they were to live in the Soviet Union and describing how much financial support they received to bring up their many children, something which they would never have imagined under the Polish regime. Another article reported that women had previously had to pay 250 zloty for the birth of a child but did not have to pay at all at the newly built Soviet maternity hospital. An obstetrician was quoted as saying that he handled three times more childbirths in 1939 than 1938.[41] Even if a woman was divorced, the Soviet laws protected the mother and her children, and required child support from her former husband.[42] Such measures to encourage women to give birth to children intensified in the postwar years when, as a result of the extreme war losses, the Soviet Union embarked on an unprecedented pronatalist campaign of "Mothers with Many Children."

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[39] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 28 March 1940, pp. 1-3.

[40] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 29 June 1940, p. 6.

[41] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 25 December 1940, p. 3.

Following a nation-wide trend in the 1930s, the Soviets also promoted a wives' movement of obshchestvennitsy. "Party Life," a series of articles in the regional newspaper *Vil'na Ukraina*, emphasized the importance of housewives' volunteer work for the party organization.[43] At one factory in L'viv, instead of eating the unpleasant food at the factory dining hall, workers always went home for lunch and supper, so that they often did not come back to the work on time and did not want to attend political meetings after work. Concerned with such conditions, the wife of one factory director decided to improve the dining hall.[44] She organized a group of women to engage in improving the facility, and prepared quick, cheap and tasty food for the workers. The wives' work ensured that workers no longer had to rush home for meals and made it easier for them to participate in the political meetings. Thus, the wives' movement greatly contributed to the party organization by providing workers with time-saving food arrangements. The article explained that during the interwar period, women were only interested in the narrow world of family and church, and only under the Soviet regime were women given a variety of chances to engage in creative social work. Such official recognition of the importance of wives in society was clearly a reflection of the Stalinist gender policy of the 1930s. While officially committed to "women's liberation," the Soviet regime in Western Ukraine during this brief period was indeed characterized by the neoconservatism of the 1930s rather than by influences from the 1920s, when the zhenotdel in Moscow had attempted to modernize women on its own initiative.

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[42] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 29 June 1941, p. 6; 28 April 1940, p. 6; 22 November 1940, p. 4.

[43] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 22 May 1940, p. 2.

[44] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 31 May 1941, p. 2.

The Soviets' new efforts with respect to women were suddenly interrupted by the attack by Nazi Germany on 22 June 1941. The population of Western Ukraine was reduced to even harsher living conditions. During the following years, the Ukrainian nationalists engaged in a fierce underground partisan struggle against the Nazis and the Soviets. More systematic mobilization of women by the Soviets was postponed until after the Second World War, when, as a result of a fierce civil war with the Ukrainian nationalists, the Soviet leadership decided to reinstitute women's organizations and attempted to use women as one of the driving forces to Sovietize the region.

Chapter Two

Organizing Women in Post-War Western Ukraine: Women's Departments (*Zhinviddily*) and Women's Councils (*Zhinrady*)

Introduction

In late July 1944, the Soviet Army entered L'viv, the historic capital of Western Ukraine, reestablished the Soviet regime, and resumed the construction of a socialist society, which had been interrupted by the German attack on 22 June 1941. The major tasks facing the Soviet leaders were the restoration of the economy, the reestablishment of the state and party organizations, and the consolidation of Soviet power in Western Ukraine, all of which the Ukrainian nationalists opposed with armed resistance. In fact, the numerous decrees and measures employed by the Soviet authorities were, not coincidentally, related to changes in tactics by the nationalist forces. Similarly, in terms of women, the Soviets' decision to specifically organize women reflected the nationalists' tactical change in their recruitment methods. In 1944-1945, the Ukrainian nationalist guerrillas considerably increased their efforts to recruit women. Initially recruiting a handful of women into ancillary positions as a result of the shortage of men, especially young men, resulting from their armed struggle with the Poles, Germans, and Soviets, the Ukrainian nationalist forces began relying increasingly on women and girls in every sector of their underground activities.[1] Women's increased participation was reflected in their frequent appearance in Soviet reports.[2] The Soviet side thus soon began to use its own gender-specific tactics in order to counter those of the nationalists by organizing a separate organization solely for women.

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[1] One such woman, Maria Savchyn Pyskir, wrote an extensive memoir of her underground activities. See Chapter Five.

Local party leaders had previously expressed the need to organize local Ukrainian women for the building of socialism. In Drohobych oblast, for example, there had already been a sporadic effort to direct women, in the form of a women's council, against the Ukrainian nationalists.[3] Official announcement of the mobilization of women for this task occurred in April 1945, when a decree of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine (CPU), entitled "On Work among Women in Western Oblasts," laid the foundation of Soviet gender politics in Western Ukraine for the following years.[4] The decree emphasized the importance of political work among the female population, namely establishing its allegiance to the Soviet regime, its active participation in social, economic, and daily life, and the organization of women in the struggle against the "Ukrainian-German nationalists." To accomplish these purposes, the decree instructed all local party committees in Western Ukraine to organize "delegates' meetings" and "women's councils." As supervising institutions, women's departments or *zhinviddily* (*viddily po roboti sered zhinok*: departments for work among women, *zhenotdely* in Russian) were created within oblast party committees of the eight western Ukrainian oblasts and Izmail oblast. The organization of women assumed the form of both "delegates' meetings" and "women's councils (*zhinrady* in Ukrainian and *zhensovety* in Russian)". To the students of Soviet women's history, the women's council is a somewhat familiar organization, but they usually associate it not with postwar Western Ukraine but with the Soviet Union of the 1970s and 1980s.

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[2] Jeffrey Burds. "Gender and Policing in Soviet West Ukraine, 1944-1948," *Cahiers du Monde russe*, vol. 42, no. 2-4 (avril-décembre 2001): 279-319.

[3] *Suspil'no-politychnyi rozvytok zakhidnykh oblastei URSR, 1939-1989*, p. 83.

[4] See the decree signed by the Ukrainian Politburo on 5 April 1945. TsDAHO f. 1, op. 6, spr. 859, ark. 133-136.

In 1986, at the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which became the landmark of *perestroika*, Mikhail Gorbachev set about effecting major economic and political reforms ranging from private ownership of property, private enterprise, and public discussion and criticism, to the relaxation of censorship. In his speech before the Congress, Gorbachev also referred to women. He advocated the improvement of women's status, urged the promotion of more women to party posts, and called for the strengthening of the Soviet women's organization, asserting that, "Women's councils (zhensovety) could help to resolve a wide range of social problems arising in the life of our country."[5] Gorbachev's remarks on women's councils suddenly attracted the attention of Western, particularly British, feminist historians, and attracted them to the scholarly study of this women's organization. Though its existence was already known of in the West since the 1970s, particularly through the International Women's Year celebrations in 1975, the topic of women's councils had hardly made inroads into Western scholarship. According to the existing scholarship, women's councils, as women-only social organizations, began to emerge as a part of Khrushchev's attempts to reorganize Soviet society in the late 1950s. In the wake of his repudiation of Stalinism, Khrushchev attempted to reconstruct state and society by eliminating bureaucratic privileges and encouraging mass participation in social organizations such as trade unions and volunteer groups. Among these were women's councils. Loosely linked to trade union or party committees, women's councils were engaged in a wide range of political, economic, and cultural activities. While not denying the fundamental premise of the Soviet one-party state -- that any independent or non-party groups and movements were not formally permitted -- Genia Browning, the Western scholar of the women's councils, presented them as spontaneous organizations comparable to the women's consciousness-raising groups found in Western countries. In an attempt to fill the "blank spot" of the study of organizations for women in the Soviet Union -- since the zhenotdel was abolished in the 1930s, there had been no major study on women's organizations -- these scholars perceived women's councils to have been the "spiritual heir" and "continuance" of the zhenotdel and its delegate meetings.[6] However, the abrupt collapse of the Soviet Union stalled further inquiry into these "Soviet" women's organizations. Instead, attention and interest in the 1990s were directed to the growing "real" feminist movement and women's organizations in post-Soviet society. Under such circumstances, the women's councils, like any of the "official" women's organizations throughout former socialist countries, were discredited as superfluous, artificial organizations unworthy of serious scholarly inquiry by many Western scholars.[7] Thus, the study of women's councils was left under-researched.

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[5] *Soviet News*, 23 June 1986. Quoted from Genia K. Browning, *Women and Politics in the USSR: Consciousness Raising and Soviet Women's Groups* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987). p. 2.

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[6] Browning, p. 54.

[7] For an overview of official women's organizations in the former socialist countries, see Barbara Einhorn, *Cinderella Goes to Market: Citizenship, Gender and Women's Movements in East Central Europe* (London: Verso, 1993), pp. 182-215.

Recently, in the context of lively scholarly discussion on the obshechestvennitsa movement, Mary Buckley, one of the "obshechestvennitsa" scholars, argues that the obshechestvennitsa campaign actually inspired both Khrushchev's women's councils and Gorbachev's efforts to revitalize them during the era of *perestroika*.[8] However, many questions in regards to this organization are still unanswered, such as how and when it began. Unlike zhenotdel and obshechestvennitsa, whose founders were considered to have been Alexandra Kollontai and Sergo Orzhonikidze, respectively, the women's councils cannot be attributed to a single founder (Khrushchev) because, as Genia Browning has noted, some of the earliest models of women's councils were formed during the war, often in Ukraine or Moldova. Considering the fact that the period of the 1940s, so-called "High-Stalinism," has hardly been touched by historians, particularly in the field of Soviet women's history, it is still early to conclude there was a line of transition of women's organization from zhenotdel, through obshchestvennitsa, to women's councils (zhensovety).

To answer some of these questions, this chapter examines the women's organizations in Western Ukraine during the period immediately after the Second World War. It argues that the seemingly straightforward transition of women's organizations from the 1930s to the 1970s was not as smooth as one might imagine. Women were caught in the brutal civil war between the Ukrainian nationalists and the Soviet authorities as both parties competed to recruit women. Thus, women constituted an indispensable reservoir of labour for both sides. During this period in Western

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[8] Buckley, "The Soviet 'Wife-Activist' down on the Farm," p. 282.

Ukraine, the duties expected of women were far removed from those suggested by the womanly image of obshechestvennitsa espoused in the Stalinist gender policies and imposed on women in the rest of the Soviet Union.

In terms of the form of women's organizations, archival evidence from Western Ukraine suggests that the earliest form of Soviet women's councils probably existed there, when, coincidentally, Khrushchev was the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine. A close examination of the former Communist Party archives reveals a unique and complicated picture of women's organizations in Western Ukraine, in which women's departments (zhenotdely), delegates' meetings, and women's councils (zhensovety/zhinrady) all co-existed.

Women's Departments, Delegate Meetings, and Women's Councils

What was the relationship between delegates' meetings, women's councils, and women's departments, and how did each function? In a word, the women's organizations in Western Ukraine functioned in a three-level system. The delegates' meeting organized the female population as a whole. Women's councils were formed from groups of the more politically conscious women selected from the delegates' meetings. Both were supervised by "woman organizers" at the raion party committees (raikom). Woman organizers also consisted of the women's departments of the oblast party committees (obkom). The women's departments were the highest supervisory body in each oblast.

According to the decree of April 1945, the work of the delegates' meetings was aimed at "mass political education, liquidation of illiteracy and semi-illiteracy among women, mobilization of women into active struggle against the Ukrainian-German nationalists, preparation of qualified female cadres for responsible positions in the economy."[9] Delegates' meetings were set up at local soviets, factories, administration buildings, schools, universities, kolkhozy, or housing offices. A delegates' meeting was to consist of twenty to forty women, each elected out of every ten to fifteen women from each institution. During their term of three to six months, delegates attended meetings for their "political education."

However, the practices of the women's organizations showed a wide variety of organizational approaches. The number of delegates varied greatly depending on the number of adult women in each institution or village. For example, in Kaminko-Bus'kyi raion in L'viv oblast, which had 9,097 adult women in early 1945, 323 delegates were elected for 20 meetings, so that a delegates' meeting consisted of 16-17 delegates, with one delegate elected from every 30 women.[10] By contrast, for the delegates' meeting at L'viv University, which had 182 female employees (though none of them were full-time professors) in late 1946, 17 delegates were elected, or one delegate out of every 10 women.[11]

When a delegates' meeting was not in session, the women's council was to perform the "daily guidance" of the work of the delegates' meeting. A women's council consisted of between three and seven women chosen from the delegates. The women's council at L'viv University included seven members out of 17 delegates. A women's council, however, was not a simple selection of the more politically conscious women from the delegates' meeting; it also included non-elected delegates, who often were professionals, medical doctors, including gynecologists, nurses, school teachers, and librarians. They would join in a section or give lectures at seminars or delegates' meetings. To accomplish the April decree's intentions for delegates' meetings, women's councils performed a variety of activities at the everyday level ranging from political education, culture, and elections to improving living conditions. The plans of the activities of the delegates' meetings and women's councils had to be approved by the party organization. The works was divided into sections such as culture, education, industry, trade, schools, elections, land, and sanitation. Each section, as a rule, had to include at least three delegates. The type of sections established and their work also varied depending on the location of the women's council. In the immediate postwar years, women's councils and their sections engaged in activities directly related to reconstruction: helping families of soldiers with their agricultural work; repairing schools, hospitals, daycare centres, and dormitories; and helping with war-orphans. With respect to cultural and educational activities, women's councils and their respective sections read newspapers at factories, prepared wall newspapers, and organized cultural exhibitions, film and theatre presentations, and musical concerts. In the countryside, the establishment of seasonal day cares became the most important issue for kolkhoz women. In cities, women activists at housing offices, many of whom were housewives, were engaged in more "wifely activities," repairing and decorating factory or workers' dormitories, or gardening. In contrast, the women's council at L'viv

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[9] TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 6, spr. 859, ark. 133-136.

[10] DALO, f. P-3, op. 2, spr. 291, ark. 19.

[11] DALO, f. P-3, op. 1, spr. 491, ark. 114.

University particularly focused on its members' scholarly activities, such as learning foreign languages and publication of academic books.[12]

The cultural activities were often held in connection with major political events and meetings such as the election of the Soviet deputies, May Day, International Women's Day celebrations, the tenth anniversary of the unification of Western and Eastern Ukraine in 1949, and the anniversary of the October Revolution. During an election of the Soviet deputies, delegates and members of women's councils often worked as "female-agitators" by organizing people for special campaigns and conducting seminars, lectures, and "talks." The women's council's duty was to make certain that the entire electorate voted. Reports outlining what kind of work women activists successfully did or did not perform reveal the wide range of their expected duties. As well, the detailed reports of the activities of a women's council, especially of its chair, could reveal who the most active women were, thus creating a reservoir of personnel for the party and other state organizations. Being the chair of a women's council often led to a series of promotions. In 1947, two of the four female deputies in the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet from L'viv oblast were former chairs of women's councils.

From 1945 to 1950, three large-scale general re-elections of members for delegates' meetings and women's councils were held in Western Ukraine: in May 1946, June 1948, and December 1949. When the delegates were re-elected, so were the members of the women's councils. Each election was turned into a propaganda campaign focusing on the major problems relating to the mobilization of women in the region: the first re-election highlighted early organizational difficulties, while the next two addressed the Fourth Five Year Plan and collectivization. Each time, all Western oblasts steadily increased the number of delegate meetings, delegates, and women's councils (see Table 2-1).

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[12] DALO, f. P-3, op. 1, spr. 491, ark. 115.

Table 2-1. Number of women's councils in Western Ukraine.

Oblast	number of local soviets	number of women's councils				
		1945	1946	1947	1948	1949
Volhynia	866		812	921	1081	
Drohobych	672		745	881	985	
L'viv	706	742	973	1071	1100	1117
Rivne	810		741	875	985	985
Stanyslav	695		816	844	880	1030
Ternopil'	938		919	1077	1395	
Transcarpathia	491		203	550	630	
Chernivtsi	332		497	533	622	
Izmail	193		430	498	614	

Source: DALO, f. P-3, op. 1, spr. 323, ark. 77.

The first goal of women organizers was to provide all local soviets (used here as a territorial marker usually corresponding to a village or city district) with at least one women's council and a delegates' meeting. When this task was not accomplished, raion party committees and women organizers were repeatedly instructed to do so by the oblast party committees. Especially in the countryside, the number of women's councils and delegates' meetings often corresponded to the number of local soviets. As the collectivization process accelerated from 1947 onwards, the number of women's councils at kolkhozy dramatically increased. In the cities, in contrast, many women's councils were formed at factories or other institutions (See Table 2-2).

Table 2-2. Structure of Women's Councils and Delegate Meetings in Zaliznychnyi raion, L'viv oblast, June 1948.

Number of women's councils by Location		Number of women's council members (from local population)								Number of Delegates by nationality	
		By Party membership		By Social composition		By Election Status		By Education			
Industries	36	Communists	72	White collar employees (sluzhashchie)	213	Newly elected	433	Higher	23	Ukrainians	185
Institutions	19	Komsomols	15	Workers	128	Re-elected	42	Secondary	182	Russians	274
Housing offices	15	Non-Party	389	Housewives	134			Elementary	275	Jews	18
Total	70		475 (57)		475 (57)		475 (57)		480	Poles	2
										Georgian	1
										Armenian	1
										Latvian	1
										Unknown	– (see note)
										Total	582

Note. The total number of delegates (582) does not correspond to the total number of each nationality group, indicating that there were others whose nationality was not known, which was not included in these statistics.

Source: DALO, f. P-3, op. 2, spr. 525, ark. 134-135.

Located in the city centre near the railroad station, the structure of the women's organization in Zaliznychnyi raion was typical of the Soviet transformation in Western Ukraine. Many women's councils were formed within industrial sectors and its members were predominantly working class. In addition, the majority of the members and of the working class in general were Russians or East Ukrainians, who immigrated to the region after the war, a new phenomenon in the history of the region. Only 57 women out of 475 were from the local female population.

An overview of the structure of women's organizations in Western Ukraine allows for the identification of the differences between the women's councils in the 1940s in Western Ukraine and the Soviet Union of the 1970s. One of the characteristics of Soviet women's councils in the 1970s was their hierarchical structure. In most regions, local women's councils were under the authority of other women's councils at higher levels even though the exercise of authority by the higher-level women's councils varied from region to region.[1] In some regions, the raion women's councils included representatives from the local women's councils in such places as villages or kolkhoz. In contrast, women's councils in Western Ukraine were not formed at the different levels such as raion, oblast, and republic. Therefore, there was no organized hierarchical order linking these women's councils together. Instead, however, they were subject to the strict guidance first of the women organizers at raion party committees, then of the women's departments at oblast party committees. In addition, the women's councils in the 1970s were closely linked to trade unions rather than the communist party .

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[1] Browning, p. 65.

The oblast women's department consisted of a chair and three instructors. Each instructor was assigned to supervise about twelve raions (as in the case of the L'viv oblast) for inspection and consultation. The women organizers at raion party committees were responsible for women's affairs at the raion level; in fact, these women organizers had the most direct contact with the local female population at large. Officially, the women's departments in Western Ukraine existed from 1945 to 1956. Archival sources confirm that they were most active from 1945 to 1951, the period of great social transformation in Western Ukraine.[2]

Practices and Organizational Problems

How did women's departments, delegates' meetings, and women's councils work in practice? In late May 1945, a month after the April decree, the first Oblast Congress of Women in L'viv was held. Within less than a month after Germany's surrender, the L'viv Opera theatre was filled with more than 800 people in a victorious mood. This congress was featured in the headlines of the local newspaper *Vil'na Ukraina* for four days.[3] Women delegates gave speeches about their difficult experiences under Polish rule and German occupation and thanked the Red Army for liberating L'viv. Some women were already reporting about the work of their women's councils. Olena Mykytenko, a woman organizer in Bibrs'kyi raion, stated that her raion had 187 active delegates and 24 chairs in the women's councils. She explained that the women's councils had already been operative for three months, helping the families of Red Army soldiers with field work, helping mothers with many children to obtain benefits, or doing repair work at schools, even though the women's councils had been officially launched only a month before. Their stated duty was "to struggle against the German-Ukrainian nationalists."[4] In July 1945, in L'viv oblast, which had 706 local soviets, there were 808 delegates' meetings, of which 484 were established in villages and 324 in institutions. There were 8,626 delegates, of which 5,942 were from villages and 2,684 from the institutions. The L'viv oblast had 742 women's councils, of which 447 were formed in villages and 295 in institutions.[5] Behind such numerically impressive reports and the bombastic celebrations, however, the women's organizational tasks had only started, and the difficulties that the organizations faced even before starting work among women were overwhelming.

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[2] *Ukrains'kyi radians'kyi entsyklopedychnyi slovnyk* (Kyiv: Holovna redaktsiia Ukrains'koi radians'koi entsyklopedii, 1986), p. 625.

[3] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 30 May, 1 June, 2 June, and 3 June 1945.

Among these many problems, three that were closely interrelated stemmed from Western Ukraine's unique situation in the Soviet Union. First, as occurred in party or state formation in Western Ukraine in general, the women's organizational work suffered from ignorance, inefficiency, and a lack of qualified personnel. Secondly, the lack of "local" Ukrainian women in the Soviet administration constituted the most serious problem for the Soviet regime. Thirdly, the work of women activists was considerably hindered by the Ukrainian nationalists, who saw them as Soviet collaborators and attempted to punish them by any means available.

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[4] DALO, f. P-3, op. 1, spr. 197, ark. 30.

[5] DALO, f. P-3, op. 1, spr. 323, ark. 77.

In November 1945, six months after the April decree, the Central Committee issued another decree urging that the organizational work among women be undertaken more effectively and appropriately.[6] The November decree specifically referred to the unsatisfactory fulfillment of the April decree in the Stanyslav and Chernivtsi oblasts, where women organizers had not been appointed in all raions. Ten raions out of thirty-eight in Stanyslav and two raions out of twenty in Chernivtsi had no raion women organizers. The decree also criticized the party organizations for a variety of offences. They had failed to inform young women about the "fascist nature" of the Ukrainian nationalist ideology. Many villages in both oblasts had never elected members for delegates' meetings and women's councils. Even where women's councils and delegates' meetings had been set up, they were functioning very poorly. Meetings were being held very rarely or informally. Only episodic lectures were being given, and important issues such as "the domestic and international politics of the Soviet Union," "what the Soviet regime gave working women," and "the perspective and tasks of the future development of our state" were being unsatisfactorily explained to women.

To remedy this situation, the November decree instructed both oblasts to appoint all their raion women organizers by 1 December 1945, to improve other work among women, and to report by January 1946 on how successfully the original April decree was being fulfilled. Not surprisingly, however, the harsh wording of the announcement and the allotment of such a brief time period did not improve matters, so the Central Committee of CPU issued a third decree with similar contents in the spring of 1946 urging the completion of organizational work, this time accompanied with instructions to hold general re-elections for all delegates' meetings and women's councils in all Western oblasts.[7] Stanyslav oblast was again criticized for not fulfilling the November decree, since it was still missing eight raion women organizers. The situation was no better in the other oblasts. In Rivne oblast, five raions out of thirty-one had no women organizers, and the provincial women's department had only one instructor -- far from satisfactory. L'viv oblast, which had three instructors, repeatedly told the Central Committee that they were being assigned too much work and could not properly carry out their duties that required them to travel and supervise several raions.[8]

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[6] TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 6, spr. 841, ark. 32-38.

The lack of qualified women was the major reason for the insufficient organizational progress. As a result of the Central Committee's three decrees and the oblast women's department's pressure, women organizers were assigned to most, if not all, raion party committees. Whether these organizers were capable of carrying out their duties posed another problem, however. Comments questioning women organizers' capabilities are abundant in instructors' reports. As well, women organizers often revealed their inadequate qualifications in their own monthly, quarterly, semi-annual, or annual reports to the oblast women's departments, for these reports were often submitted very late or after long intervals, or did not follow the required format. Also, generally, the "work among women" in the countryside lagged behind that of their counterparts in the cities. The women organizers in the five raions in L'viv were efficient, worked diligently among women, and submitted detailed reports to the obkom women's department every month. The official forms for women's department reports measured virtually all the work among women in terms of quantity: the numbers of delegates' and women's council meetings, conferences, lectures, seminars, daycare centres, mothers with many children, or female stakhanovites. In addition, these numbers were inaccurate not only in terms of the reliability of the sources but also with respect to simple arithmetic. After receiving the report from Krakovets'kyi raion, the head of the L'viv oblast women's department, Raisa Vyshemirs'ka, wrote back to the author of the report, "You state that in your raion, there are twenty-three delegates' meetings, of which eight are at villages, six at factories, four at institutes, and that the total is eighteen. So which is the correct number, eighteen or twenty-three?"[9] On another occasion, she kindly corrected the misspellings of her own name and the department's name: "It is called 'Women's Department of Work Among Women at the L'viv Obkom' not 'Women's Organizational Department of L'viv Obkom.'"[10] Such mistakes were abundant, particularly in the first years of women's work, 1945-1946, when women organizers as well as local party organizations did not fully understand their duties. In Stanyslav oblast, seven organizers out of thirty-seven were declared incapable of carrying out their duties because of their inexperience and semi-literacy.[11]

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[7] TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 9, spr. 390, ark. 123-128.

[8] DALO, f. P-3, op. 2, spr. 150, ark. 5.

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[9] DALO, f. P-3, op. 1, spr. 265, ark. 113. A similar document is also found in DALO, f. P-3, op. 1, spr. 265, ark. 48.

[10] DALO, f. P-3, op. 1, spr. 265, ark. 51, 57.

[11] TsDAHO, f.1, op. 23, spr. 4581, ark. 178.

The issue of literacy was in fact a very complicated and serious problem in Western Ukraine as a whole. The majority of women organizers were actually recruited from outside of Western Ukraine, mostly from Eastern Ukraine and elsewhere in the Soviet Union. Many of them were Russian-speakers and had little command of the Ukrainian language. A woman organizer in Zhovkivs'kyi raion, for example, was reported to have no command of the Ukrainian language.[12] It may be surprising that the above-mentioned problems were caused mainly by women from Eastern Ukraine and Russia, who might have been expected to have been more qualified and efficient by comparison with "illiterate and backward" local Western Ukrainian women.

The lack of a local Soviet cadre was the most serious problem and, according to some scholars, constituted a major obstacle to the Sovietization of Western Ukraine.[13] While the exact number of Russians and Eastern Ukrainians who immigrated into Western Ukraine after the war is unknown, it is generally estimated that more than half of administrative jobs and the so-called "positions of responsibility" were taken by newcomers. One study indicates that in any Western Ukrainian oblast, the local population accounted for less than 20 percent of the "nomenclature" posts.[14] Furthermore, in the distribution of gender and ethnic origin, it is obvious that the local female population were far more under-represented than the local Ukrainian male population (see Table 2-3). The proportion of nomenclature of local origin (both female and male) was higher in the countryside than in the city of L'viv. But the proportion of female nomenclature (of both local and non-local origin) was higher in the city than in the countryside, reflecting the influx of non-local immigrants into the city. Therefore, the number of local female nomenclature was disproportionately high in the countryside.

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[12] DALO, f. 3, op. 2, spr. 150, ark. 54.

[13] Bilinsky, *The Second Soviet Republic: The Ukraine after World War II*, p. 91.

[14] Rubl'ov and Cherchenko, pp. 212-213.

Table 2-3. Share of locals and women among nomenclature in L'viv oblast, 1950

	Location, city (misto, MK) and district (raion, RK) party committees	Number of nomenclature of miskoms and raikoms	Proportion of local origin	Proportion of women (Local and non-local)	Proportion of local women
The City of L'viv	L'vivs'kyi MK	670	11.4	14.6	1.4
	Zaliznychnyi RK	465	5.6	12.6	2.3
	Stalins'kyi	504	10.9	20.2	3.1
	Chervonoarmiis'kyi	358	13.7	29.3	4.1
	Shevchenkivs'kyi	341	6.4	17.8	2.0
The City of Zolochiv	Zolochivs'kyi MK	92	17.4	21.7	1.0
Raions	Bibrs'kyi RK	215	43.7	19.8	3.2
	Brodivs'kyi	181	39.7	15.4	4.9
	Briukhovyts'kyi	205	49.2	12.6	4.8
	Bus'kyi	155	43.9	10.3	4.5
	Velyko-Mostivs'kyi	144	48.6	18.7	2.0
	Vynnykivs'kyi	264	59.5	18.6	11.3
	Horodoks'kyi	218	46.7	14.7	3.2
	Hrynians'kyi	127	69.2	11.0	7.0
	Zhovkivs'kyi	122	41.0	11.4	1.6
	Zabolotsevs'kyi	130	58.4	13.8	3.8
	Zolochivs'kyi	241	47.3	17.9	6.6
	Ivano-Frankivs'kyi	195	67.7	11.7	6.1
	Kaminko-Bus'kyi	178	50.5	11.2	5.5
	Krakovets'kyi	188	61.7	27.1	6.3
	Krasnens'kyi	209	50.7	10.5	0.9
	Kurykivs'kyi	161	60.2	13.6	5.5
	Lopatyns'kyi	208	71.1	11.5	2.8
	Maherivs'kyi	73	50.7	12.3	0
	Nemyrivs'kyi	190	60.2	24.2	3.6
	Novo-Myrians'kyi	127	71.1	6.3	0.7
	Novo-Iarychivs'ky	91	50.7	15.4	10.9
	Oles'kyi	229	48.4	25.3	13.9
	Peremyshlians'kyi	114	58.7	9.7	0

Pidkamins'kyi	137	45.2	15.3	5.8
Pomorians'kyi	224	55.3	15.2	8.4
Pustomytivs'kyi	171	48.5	14.0	4.0
Rava-Rus'kyi	165	58.2	14.5	4.2
Radekhivs'kyi	262	59.2	18.3	8.0
Sokal's'kyi	153	43.8	9.8	1.3
Shchyrets'kyi	178	59.5	15.2	5.6
Iavorivs'kyi	216	55.5	13.4	7.0

Source: My calculation based on DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 564, ark. 70.

Not surprisingly, the situation of all-female organizations was even worse, for the low percentage of local Ukrainian women in the party organizations showed that they were severely under-represented (see Table 2-4).

Table 2-4. Distribution of raikom and miskom woman organizers in Western Ukrainian oblasts, January 1947

	Required number of organizers:	Number of active organizers, local and non-local:	Numbers of active local organizers:
Volhynia	33	29	1
Drohobych	31	31	0
L'viv	37	37	0
Rivne	31	29	2
Stanyslav	38	35	2
Ternopil'	41	40	0
Transcarpathia	15	12	8
Chernivtsi	20	20	0
Izmail	16	16	2
Total	262	249	15

Source: TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 23, spr. 4581.

In 1947, each Western oblast, with the exception of Transcarpathia, recruited only one or two women organizers from the local population. The oblasts of

Drohobych, L'viv, Ternopil', and Chernivtsi, had no local women organizers. In 1947, L'viv, the historic capital of Western Ukraine and centre of the nationalist movement, had no local Ukrainian woman among its women organizers, and even the chair of the oblast women's department was not recruited from the local population. On the other hand, in Transcarpathia oblast, out of fifteen women organizers, eight were recruited from the local population, resulting in a high percentage in comparison with those of other oblasts. One explanation for this stark contrast was the unique situation in Transcarpathia: the virtual absence of the Ukrainian nationalist movement, the local population's relatively passive attitude and dependence on the Soviet authorities, and the resulting relatively quick pace of collectivization.

Heavy reliance on outsiders was also evident in the ethnic composition of the women's councils. For example, in Chervonoarmiis'kyi raion in the L'viv oblast, in the fifty-six women's councils, only seven chairwomen were recruited from the local female Ukrainian population. Other ethnic groups included twenty-four Russians, eighteen Ukrainians from Eastern Ukraine, and others (four Jews, one Estonian, one Armenian, and one Pole).[15]

Even if local or non-local qualified women were available, many women activists were afraid of the nationalists' retaliation and thus reluctant to support the Soviet regime. Indeed, the work of women's departments and women's councils was hindered by both competing camps. The Soviet authorities had to ensure that the female cadres were also "politically reliable" and often did not trust the local women themselves or their husbands or sons who could have been involved in the nationalist movement. The Ukrainian nationalists saw anybody supporting the Soviet regime as a "traitor" and condemned him or her to execution. A specially organized underground intelligence service unit carried out the punishment of the suspected Soviet collaborators. [16] Reflecting the severity of the nationalist-Soviet confrontation, examples of the nationalists' obstruction of the women's mobilization are abundant. In the 1947 election for the Supreme Soviet, for instance, the nationalists' call for a boycott caused many local Ukrainian women to abstain from voting. Also, many women were afraid to go to conferences or meetings because of the nationalists' influence in villages. The reports by women activists confirmed that many villagers did not turn out to vote as a result of nationalist propaganda and death threats.[17]

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[15] DALO, f. 3, op. 1, spr. 490, ark. 139.

Among the many women who worked for the Soviet regime, the chairs of women's councils and kolkhoz women were two of the most visible targets. As the Central Committee's decree had stated that one of the reasons for organizing women was the struggle against the Ukrainian nationalist guerrillas, the women activists were expected to fulfill dangerous duties. In so doing, some of the more able women activists became the victims of the nationalists. The nationalists undertook reprisals against Soviet activists regardless of their ethnic origin, even against local Ukrainian women who had "betrayed" Ukraine. In June 1945, at the delegates' meeting in Bus'kyi raion, in the L'viv oblast, a chair of a women's council, Zabron's'ka, spoke about how she had suffered under Polish rule and German occupation, and called on women to participate actively in the socialist economy. The next day, the

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[16] Burds, "Gender and Policing in Soviet West Ukraine, 1944-1948."

[17] DALO, f. P-3, op. 2, spr. 291, ark. 149.

"Banderites" killed her. This incident, no doubt, made other women afraid of becoming visibly involved in the Soviet work.[18] An equally shocking incident happened in October 1948 when the nationalists killed a woman deputy for the Supreme Soviet of Ukraine. Mariia Mats'ko was a local peasant woman from Iavorivs'kyi raion, in the L'viv oblast, the chair of a women's council, and a kolkhoz worker. Although the official press mentioned only that she had died "while on duty," secret party documents indicate that the nationalists had killed her at her home.[19] These documents, describing her career and activities, reveal that she was targeted precisely because she was a prominent Soviet activist and chair of a women's council. Since 1945, the party reports had frequently mentioned her as a leading local figure in organizing women, helping to organize the kolkhoz, and publicly condemning the nationalists. During the elections to the USSR Supreme Soviet in 1946, she served as the head of the electoral committee in her raion. Despite death threats by the nationalists, she fulfilled her duties effectively; the inhabitants of her village finished voting much earlier than other villagers.[20] The election campaign was one of the most dangerous jobs for the women activists as the nationalist forces made great efforts to hinder the population from participating in the Soviet election. By 1947, Mats'ko was elected a deputy for the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet. The fact that the nationalists would assassinate such a well known and accomplished activist left the impression that no one was safe.

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[18] DALO, f. P-3, op. 1, spr. 265, ark. 112.

[19] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 8 October 1948, p. 4.

[20] DALO, f. P-3, op. 1, spr. 488, ark. 162.

The Status of Women in Western Ukraine: Local vs. Outsiders

Although the majority of women activists were recruited from the eastern oblasts and Russia, it would be a simplification to conclude that the low number of local women in leading positions was evidence that the Soviet authorities extensively relied on outsiders and remained an alien regime for the local Ukrainian population. True, the Soviet authorities were suspicious of local Ukrainian women. At the same time, however, it was an absolute necessity to recruit the local population into the Soviet administration in order to justify the Soviets' extremely unpopular presence and to better communicate with the peasantry. Despite the danger the women activists faced, the instructions from Kiev and the obkom women's departments repeatedly instructed local party officials to increase the recruitment of local women to managerial posts. The Soviet authorities strenuously emphasized gender equality, sponsored welfare programs to mobilize women for the socialist transformation of the economy and society, and tried to recruit local Ukrainian women who, ideally, embodied the "Soviet Heroine" by being model Soviet workers and mothers. Women from Eastern oblasts could not be represented in the Soviet public discourse in Western Ukraine. For any Soviet public event, such as women's conferences, elections for the Supreme Soviet, and celebrations of International Women's Day, delegate seats were reserved for local Ukrainian women.

In January 1947, the First Conference of Women from the Western Ukrainian oblasts in Kiev was one of the few occasions on which women from Western Ukraine were at the center of publicity in unified Ukraine. The delegates gathered in Kiev and celebrated their land's liberation from Poland and Germany. Dressed in traditional and regional Ukrainian costumes, the women delegates were photographed sitting together with Ukrainian leaders, including Khrushchev. The composition of the delegates and the minutes of the conference proceedings reveal the image the Soviet official discourse sought to project of Western Ukrainian women, namely, that they were local, peasants, and relatively older women. Out of 495 delegates, 468 were selected from the local population, and half of them were from a peasant background.[21]

Table 2-5. Distribution by age of the delegates from three oblasts to the First Republican Conference of Women from the Western Ukrainian Oblasts, January 1947.

Year of Birth	Age in January 1947	L'viv	Volhynia	Drohobych
1883	63			1
1889	57		1	
1890	56	1		
1891	55			
1892	54	2	1	1
1893	53	1		
1894	52	1		1
1895	51	1		1
1896	50	1		
Total of women in their 50s		7	2	4
1897	49	4		1
1898	48	5	1	1
1899	47	2		
1900	46	2	2	1
1901	45		1	2
1902	44	7	2	1
1903	43	2	1	1
1904	42	2	1	1
1905	41	4	4	1
1906	40	1	1	2
Total of women in their 40s		29	13	15

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[21] TsDAHO, f.1, op. 75, spr. 208, ark. 16.

1907	39	7		1
1908	38	1		3
1909	37	3		1
1910	36	4	3	1
1911	35	1	1	3
1912	34		2	1
1913	33		1	
1914	32	2		2
1915	31	3	2	1
1916	30	1	1	
Total of women in their 30s		22	10	13
1917	29	2		3
1918	28	2		2
1919	27	1	3	2
1920	26	5	3	4
1921	25	4	2	3
1922	24	1	3	1
1923	23	5	1	1
1924	22	2	1	1
1925	21	2		2
1926	20	2	2	1
Total of women in their 20s		26	16	20
1927	19	3	2	3
1928	18	1	1	1
1929	17			
1930	16			
Total of women under 20		4	3	4
unknown		4	1	5
Total		92	44	57
Average		36.05	33.27	33.55

Source: My calculation, based on TsDAHO, f.1, op. 75, spr. 207, ark. 2.

While the average age of the delegates was approximately 34 years old, the distribution of age groups shows that older women (40 and above) comprised more than one-third of the delegates (see Table 2-5). These women had reached adulthood well before the Second World War, and thus experienced the hardships of family life and child-rearing under both the Polish state and the German occupation. Given that the Soviet Union had just begun an energetic campaign to encourage women to have more children, -- these older women who often had many children made ideal representatives of Western Ukraine. The strategy of targeting older women in Soviet propaganda also contrasts with the fact that relatively younger women and girls were mobilized into the nationalist partisan movement.

The L'viv oblast sent the largest group of 92 delegates, out of which only four were chairs of women's councils and only four more were raion women organizers.[22] These figures suggest that the overworked women organizers and chairs of women's councils who carried out the everyday work among women, could not represent Western Ukraine because for the most part they were not local Ukrainians. Khrushchev's speech at the conference clearly revealed the emphasis put by the authorities on the role of local Western Ukrainian women in the struggle against the nationalists:

> Peasants are generally not very trustful people, they definitely want to look for and see by themselves what something is. So, it is good that you came to learn for yourselves "what the Soviet state is about," especially for women. Well, do not get upset. I do not want to offend you, and it is not your fault. It is our universal misfortune that women are backward in their political development. Peasants and workers in Western Ukraine are backward, but peasant women lag behind even more. This is a fact and nothing can be done about it. Therefore, our enemies, in their struggle with us, are relying on the backwardness of peasant women, and have believed that women could not support the Bolsheviks, did not support

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[22] TsDAHO, f.1, op. 75, spr. 207, ark. 2.

> the communists, because women wanted to return to the old system. They are depending on this perception of women because the most of them are illiterates.[23]

Khrushchev then presented the delegate women with a role model, an ideal peasant woman sitting at the presidium, Pasha Angelina, the most famous female tractor driver and female stakhanovite in the Soviet Union, and called for their active participation in collectivization.[24] After the conference in Kiev, the delegates went on a tour of Eastern Ukraine and visited factories, schools, and daycare centres. The event was extensively publicized in the republican and local newspapers and the women's magazine, *Radians'ka zhinka*. After returning to Western Ukraine, the delegates shared their experience and impressions at the local women's conferences and meetings.

The construction of the media image of Soviet Western Ukrainian women followed the general pattern of the creation of the Stalinist "Soviet Heroine"; that is, a backward and uneducated woman born to a poor peasant family, rises, in the wake of collectivization, to a responsible position within the kolkhoz.[25] In Western Ukraine, a national colouring was added in the official narratives of women's lives to justify the "Soviet Liberation" of both women and Western Ukraine. Such women participated in the election for the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet in 1947. The sole female deputy from L'viv oblast to the All-Union Supreme Soviet, and all of four women deputies to the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet, were local Ukrainian women.

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[23] TsDAHO, f.1, op. 23, spr. 4579, ark. 26.

[24] *Radians'ka zhinka*, no. 1-2, 1947, p. 11.

[25] For the Soviet public discourse on women, see Choi Chatterjee, *Soviet Heroines and Public Identity, 1930-1939* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, The Carl Beck Papers no. 1402, 1999); Jeffrey Brook, *Thank You, Comrade Stalin!: Soviet Public Culture from Revolution to Cold War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 89-93.

All these women fit the model of the Soviet Heroine, with emphasis on their regional identity as Western Ukrainians. A deputy to the Supreme Soviet, Oleksandra Pastushyna, had been an underground socialist activist since the Interwar period, and her husband had been killed by the Germans. Mariia Kikh, a former member of the Communist Party of Western Ukraine and Soviet partisan, became the deputy chair of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet and the next chair of the L'viv obkom women's department in 1948. Featured on the front page of *Radians'ka zhinka*, a republican women's magazine, as a "Daughter of the People," Kikh was a strong advocate of local female cadres. At her request, in the late 1940s *Radians'ka zhinka* began to publish a special section on women's councils in Western Ukraine. Iryna Vil'de was a renowned Soviet Ukrainian writer and frequent contributor to *Radians'ka zhinka*. She masterfully described the life of Western Ukrainians from the perspectives of various social classes. The nationalists killed her husband. Two deputies to the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet, Mariia Mats'ko and Pavlyna Moskal', were the chairs of women's councils. Mats'ko herself was killed by the nationalists in 1948.[26] The percentage of deputies of local origin was even higher at local soviets. The statistics from Iavorivs'kyi raion, a countryside raoin in L'viv oblast showed that the lower the level of a soviet, the higher the percentage of women of local origin became, which also means that non-local women were tolerated at middle level soviets, but not allowed to represent Western Ukrainian women in higher state bodies. Naturally, the locals predominated in the villages (see Table 2-6).

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[26] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 9, 11, 12, 25, 31, January 1947.

Table 2-6. Number of Female Soviet Deputies in Iavorivs'kyi raion, L'viv oblast, August 1949

	number of female deputies	of which number of local women
Oblast Soviet	1	1
Raion Soviet	13	9
Local Soviet	93	87

DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 140, ark. 30-31.

In order to increase the number of model Soviet women in Western Ukraine, the Soviet authorities repeatedly urged the local party organizations to promote local women into the leading posts. Indeed, the women organizers' reports to the authorities were always concerned with how many "local" women had been recruited, promoted, or awarded various honours. Being "local" became a crucial designation in the Soviet Union's affirmative action programs for the local Ukrainian population.

Nevertheless, despite all the efforts at creating a new Western Ukrainian woman, the dichotomy between local and non-local women persisted because the authorities continued to rely on migrants. By the end of 1949, out of thirty-seven women organizers in the women's department in L'viv, only four women, including Kikh herself, were recruited from the local population. In comparison with the situation in 1945-47 when there were no local women organizers, this statistic may indicate progress, but the number of Russian women organizers also increased from seven in 1946 to twelve in 1949 (see Table 2-7).

Table 2-7. Ethnic composition of the women's department in L'viv obkom.

	1946 membership(number of local women)	1949 membership(number of local women)	1950 (number of local women)
Ukrainian	28 (0)	23(4)	28 (3)
Russian	7	12	7
Polish	1	2	2
Belorussian	1	0	0

Sources. DALO, f. 3, op, 3, spr. 499, ark. 1, 188.

Despite the efforts by the women's department and the authorities' directives to involve local women in the construction of a socialist society, the recruiting process did not succeed. Moreover, the recruitment of local women was further hindered by local party officials, who were obviously reluctant to pay attention to women's issues. Many examples indicate that the local party officials, especially in the raion party organizations, did not pay adequate attention to the instructions to promote local women to responsible positions. In Ternopil' oblast, for example, the head of the women's department, in her regular monthly report to Kiev, noted that in Vyshnevets'kyi raion, no local woman had been recruited into the party, even though active women with good work records were available. Furthermore, in several other raions in the same Ternopil oblast, there was no female chair at all in local soviets.[27]

The circumstances of the non-local women also made the ethnic dichotomy difficult to overcome. From the perspective of non-local women, Western Ukraine might have offered an opportunity for upward mobility for Soviet women from Eastern Ukraine and Russia. In addition to their ideological reliability, and the fact that most women came to Western Ukraine because of their husbands' postings there, economic and social considerations played a major role in the decision of these young women in their 20s and 30s to migrate westward. Faced with the chaotic postwar reconstruction and material difficulties, they may not have been able to find suitable employment in their hometowns where returning soldiers from the front were assuming control over the positions of responsibility that may once have been held by women during the war.[28] The women faced dangerous problems and difficulties, including the threat of death in Western Ukraine. Even in the mid-1950s, a woman from Eastern Ukraine who worked in Western Ukraine wrote a letter to Khrushchev stating that she could get neither a "responsible" job nor an education in Western Ukraine. She wrote to the Soviet leader, "You emphasized that there are no two Ukraines, East and West, there is just one Ukraine, united within the brotherly Soviet state. So, I am a Ukrainian, but [in Western Ukraine] I do not have the right to work in a responsible position or study at school."[29] This letter indicates that as a result of the excessive pressure to promote local Ukrainian women, some non-local women were disadvantaged by the Soviets' affirmative action program. Thus, in the shadow of the official promotion of the model Soviet women in Western Ukraine, the public voices of non-local women were largely excluded from official Soviet Ukrainian rituals.

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[27] TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 23, spr. 4581, ark. 174

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[28] For women's lives after the Second World War, see Greta Bucher, "Struggling to Survive: Soviet Women in the Postwar Years," *Journal of Women's History*, Vol. 12, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 138-159; Elena Zubkova, *Russia after the War : Hopes, Illusions, and Disappointments, 1945-1957*, translated and edited by Hugh Ragsdale (Armonk, NY : M. E. Sharpe, 1998).

[29] Tsentr khraneniia sovremennoi dokumentatsii (Moscow). f. 5, op. 30, d. 6, l. 33-35.

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In recent years, scholars of Soviet women have sought to re-evaluate the various organizations created for Soviet women. Women's departments of the Communist Party and women's councils in post-war Western Ukraine provided another type of women's organization that differed from those that have been previously described in a number of ways. To begin with, unlike the zhenotdel in the 1920s, the women's department in post-war Western Ukraine was not created by women's own initiatives but by the Communist Party's direct order. Secondly, contrary to the previously perceived image, the women's councils in Western Ukraine were far from being either spontaneous organizations or confined to domestic duties. Many of the activities of women's councils were the same as those undertaken by the zhenotdel in the 1920s, obshechestvennitsy in the 1930s, and women's councils in the 1970s. Also, to a certain degree, the work among women was similar to that resulting from the "pragmatic feminism" in interwar Galicia. However, in Western Ukraine, a bastion of one of the strongest, nationalist movements in East Central Europe in the twentieth century, women's duties inevitably involved dangerous responsibilities. The images of "feminine duties" or "social mothering," often associated with the eventual negative evaluation of the women's councils' lesser political importance, did not apply to Western Ukraine. Indeed, many women, whether local or non-local Ukrainian women, lost their lives while fulfilling their dangerous duties. Their work made an indispensable contribution to the socialist transformation of Western Ukraine in general and to the completion of the Five Year Plan in particular.

Soviet authorities were aware of the importance of recruiting women, especially from the local population, but at the same time had to ensure the women's political reliability. The task of finding women who fit both of these potentially incompatible criteria was assigned to women activists. The majority of these women were outsiders, and they became caught up in the different priorities of the directives from Kiev, local party officials, and the local female population at large. Some local Western Ukrainian women, though very few, joined the Soviet administrative apparatus. The Soviet mobilization of women for the socialist transformation produced a dichotomous world consisting of the backward, illiterate, and apolitical local Ukrainian peasant women, associated with the old way of life, and of new-comers from Eastern oblasts and Russia.

In the early 1950s, references to the women's departments, especially to the delegates' meetings, gradually disappeared from party reports. It is assumed that from that time forward, the power of the party's women's departments declined, and women's councils finally assumed their own initiative, if not independence, and at least came to engage in more peaceful, less dangerous, activities.

Chapter Three: Women at Work

Introduction

The Fourth Five Year Plan (1946-1950) is known primarily for the postwar reconstruction of the Soviet economy. Inaugurated on 18 March 1946, the Plan called for "the complete reconstruction of the economy in the areas of the USSR occupied by the Germans, the postwar reconversion of the economy, and the further development of all areas of the USSR, which should make it possible to exceed considerably the pre-war level of economic development."[1] During the war, the Axis troops occupied areas of Ukraine, Belorussia, the Baltic republics, Crimea, Northern Caucasus, and a large part of European Russia, as far east as Stalingrad. Most of these Soviet regions had to "re-" construct due to the destruction of factories, railroads, and agricultural machineries, "re"- cover their pre war industrial level, and "re-" convert into a peacetime economy. Meanwhile, the newly acquired territories -- the Baltic states, Western Belorussia, Western Ukraine, and part of Moldova -- had to be "re-Sovietized," continuing the process begun in 1939-1941, of nationalizing industry and collectivizing agriculture. The new territories provided the Soviet Union with not only additional land and capital stock but also additional labour force -- 23.6 million people, of which approximately seven million came from Western Ukraine.[2] The impact of this new labour force was felt especially in the industrial sector as these new territories underwent considerable industrialization during the period. The Soviet directives for the industrialization of Western Ukraine specifically sought to "transform the city of L'viv into a big industrial center in Ukraine." Other plans included the reconstruction of the chemical industry in Stanyslav and Drohobych oblasts and that of natural gas in Drohobych. Transcarpathia oblast, which became a part of the USSR only in 1945 and did not experience Sovietization during 1939-41, was identified as requiring Sovietization of all sectors of its economy.[3]

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[1] Eugene Zaleski, *Stalinist Planning for Economic Growth, 1933-1953* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), p. 347.

[2] Zaleski, p. 345; Bohdan Krawchenko, *Social Change and National Consciousness in Twentieth-Century Ukraine* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1987), p. 171.

The growth of productivity stemming from the implementation of these plans was, after all, impressive. The Soviet Union made significant progress with respect to postwar reconstruction and economic development, which may even be comparable to that experienced in West Germany or Japan in the 1950s. In manpower, too, the addition of twelve million to the employed labour force between 1945 and 1950 was unmatched in Soviet history except in the First Five-Year Plan period.[4] In Western Ukraine, L'viv indeed became one of the major industrial centers in Ukraine. L'viv's new industry included automobile manufacturing and production of radio and light machinery. Older industries such as natural gas extraction and coal mining became centralized and expanded. By 1955, industrial output in Western Ukraine was approximately four times greater than it had been during the interwar period.[5] After the majority of the urban population -- predominantly Poles and Jews -- disappeared from the region, a local Western Ukrainian working class developed. However, there also occurred a massive in-migration of working-class Russians. The number of industrial workers in L'viv rose from 43,000 in 1945 to 148,000 in 1958. [6]

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[3] *Promyshlennost' i rabochii klass Ukrainskoi SSR 1946-1950: sbornyk dokumentov i materialov* (Kiev: Nakova dumka, 1980), p. 21.

[4] Sheila Fitzpatrick, "Postwar Soviet Society: The `Return to Normalcy', 1945-1953," in Susan Linz, ed., *The Impact of World War II on the Soviet Union* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Allanheld, 1985), pp. 129-156.

[5] Paul Robert Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), p. 651.

Agricultural collectivization in Western Ukraine followed the general pattern set in the Soviet Union two decades earlier, but it was accompanied by armed resistance from the Ukrainian nationalist partisans (OUN-UPA), the severity of which occupied the attention of the highest Ukrainian republican leaders, even inducing a change of leadership.[7] By 1951, as the power of the nationalists weakened, almost all of Western Ukraine's 1.5 million peasant households belonged to kolkhozy, which at the time numbered 7,000.[8]

Much like other areas that had been involved in wartime hostilities, the war changed the structure of women's participation in the labour force and women's lives. Initially, women fulfilled their traditional professions both at war and on the home front. Due to the demands of total war, however, women gradually took over jobs in many fields previously held mostly by men. Hundreds of thousands of women served in the armed forces as machine gunners, snipers, and tank drivers. Similarly, on the home front, women entered non-agrarian occupations, including heavy industries, in large numbers. By 1945, women constituted 55% of all workers in the Soviet Union and 36%

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[6] Subtelny, *Ukraine: A History*, p. 492.

[7] On the abrupt and short-lived dismissal of Khrushchev from the position of First Secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine and his replacement by Kaganovich from March to December 1947 and its connection to the issues of collectivization, see Marples, *Stalinism in Ukraine in the 1940s*, pp. 82-96.

[8] Subtelny, *Ukraine: A History*, p. 491.

in the United States.[9] In Ukraine, one study suggests, the ratio of female workers to male from 1943 to 1945 was nearly four to one.[10] Out of 3,344 new coal-mining recruits in the city of Stalino between November 1943 and July 1944, 2,389 were women. By 1944 women constituted 63.2% of industrial workers in Voroshylovhrad oblast, 46.7% in Dnipropetrovsk oblast, and 53.3% in Kharkiv oblast.[11]

The end of the war brought a new phase for women's lives. Women elsewhere, to some degree or another, had to face returning male veterans. In the United States, state and union leaders made tremendous attempts to send women home following the war in order to make way for male soldiers. Many industries already began to dismiss hundreds of thousands of female workers immediately after V-day.[12] Within two years, the proportion of women in all US occupations dropped from 36.0% in 1945 to 27.9% in 1947.[13] Subsequently, the following decades witnessed the revitalization of the family in America, in which women entered delayed marriages, left paid employment, and began families, thus contributing to the "baby boom" and new "cult of domesticity" in postwar -- and Cold War -- American society.

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[9] D'Ann Campbell, *Women at War with America: Private Lives in a Patriotic Era* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), p. 239.

[10] Smoliar, ed., *Zhinochi studii v Ukraini: zhinka v istorii ta s'ohodni*, p. 153.

[11] O. V. Rykashov, "Zaruchennia zhinok u promyslove vyrobnytstvo v URSR (1943-1945 гг.)," *Ukrains'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, no. 8 (1985): 101-107.

[12] William H. Chafe, *The Paradox of Change: American Women in the 20th Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 159. Recent U.S women's historians, however, challenge the stereotypical image of postwar American women as a "white, suburban, middle-class housewife." They attempt to show many women continued to work in the postwar period. Joanne Meyerowitz ed., *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994).

[13] Campbell, p. 239.

In the Soviet Union, by contrast, despite the fear of losing jobs, the return of soldiers from the front did not necessarily mean that women immediately lost their wartime jobs. Instead, due to extreme human (mostly male) losses sustained during the war, the Soviet government continued to rely on the female labour force after the war. Indeed, many returning male soldiers did move back into those specialties in which they had predominated before the war, thus displacing women. Men reclaimed leadership positions in kolkhozy and in heavy industries. At the same time, however, soldiers from villages often chose not to go home after demobilization due to such factors as physical incapacitation as a result of war, so that female workers remained an important force in agriculture. In 1946, a year after the end of the war, the ratio of working-age women to men in all Soviet kolkhozy was two to one.[14] Soviet official discourse never promoted the return of women to the domestic sphere, and instead continued to emphasize women's dedication to work. Although the proportion of women active in the Soviet national economy dropped from 56% in 1945 to 47% in 1950, the actual number increased from 15.9 million to 19.2 million (see table 3-1).[15]

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[14] Fitzpatrick, "Postwar Soviet Society," p. 144.

[15] Lapidus, p. 166. Other statistics say that women workers increased from 15,075 in 1945 to 18,397 in 1950. *Zhenshchiny i deti v SSSR: statisticheskii sbornik* (Moskva: Statistika, 1969), p. 80.

Table 3-1. Wage earners in the Soviet national economy, with breakdown by sex

	1945 (%)	1950 (%)
Men	12.7 million (44%)	21.2 million (53%)
Women	15.9 million (56%)	19.2 million (47%)
Total	28.6 million	40.4 million

Source: *Narodnoe khozhiaistvo SSSR 1922-1972 g.: Iuvileinyi statisticheskii ezhegodnik*, pp. 345-348.

A similar pattern of increase in female labour is evident in Ukraine (see table 3-2).

Table 3-2. Number of women and employed in separate branches of the national economy in Ukraine, 1947 and 1959.

Year		1947 (percentage)	1959(percentage)
Total		6,778, 000 (56%)	10,171,000 (49%)
Employed in	Industry	610,000 (36%)	2,255,000 (35%)
	Agriculture	4,780,000 (64%)	5,669,000 (57%)
	Education	323,000 (65%)	1,242,000 (72%)
	Health	218,000 (79%)	

Sources: TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 75, spr. 209, ark. 318; *Women and Children in the USSR*, p. 79

Women undoubtedly played an important role in the postwar economic modernization of Western Ukraine. For the first time, Western Ukrainian women received professional training on how to operate tractors and other agricultural machines. Archival sources estimate that the number of female industrial workers in the city of L'viv increased from about 1,500 in 1944 to 27,000 in 1950.[16] Economic self-determination is the key factor in Marxist ideology regarding women's emancipation. As Engels said:

> To emancipate woman and make her equal of man is and remains an impossibility so long as the woman is shut out from social productive labour and restricted to private domestic labour. The emancipation of woman will only be possible when woman can take part in production on a large, social scale, and domestic work no longer claims anything but an insignificant amount of her time.[17]

As a new socialist regime replacing the capitalist Polish state, the Soviet government sought to realize this policy with regard to Western Ukrainian women and mobilized women to participate in the labour force, just as they had with Russian women under their First Five Year Plan in the late 1920s. Women's paid work in the Soviet Union, as the high percentage of women in the labour force during the war shows, had already become a norm by the 1930s.

However, there was a notable contradiction in the Soviet ideology on women's paid work. Industrial modernization in the Soviet Union, as elsewhere in the world, was accompanied by decreasing population. Already concerned with its population decrease and declining birth rate in the 1930s, the Soviet state had introduced pronatalist programs. Nevertheless, the population crisis deepened during the war. Faced with human losses approaching 30 million, the Soviet government decided to launch a massive population growth project in 1944 by introducing awards, medals and material benefits for mothers who gave birth to numerous children. To compensate wartime losses through women's reproductive as well as productive labour, the Soviet state was required to encourage women's reproduction. The Soviet leadership attempted to carry out this policy by offering the unachievable promise of expanding state-funded support facilities so that women's "domestic work no longer claims anything but an insignificant amount of her time."

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[16] DALO, f. P-3, op. 2, spr. 499, ark. 39.

[17] *Woman Question, Selections from the Writings of Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, and V.I. Lenin* (New York: International Publishers, 1951), pp. 10-11.

This chapter looks at the women of Western Ukraine at workplaces, both industrial and agricultural, and their struggle to combine these dual duties imposed on them in the difficult material conditions of this period. The April decree in 1945, the document which laid the foundation of Soviet policies towards women, sought to mobilize women into the workforce and to prepare qualified women for leading posts in industry and agriculture. Encouraging women to enter the labour force served not only to help alleviate the postwar labour shortage but also to justify the Soviet vision of liberating women from traditional, patriarchal society.

Recruiting and Training Women for Industry

With the return of Soviet power following the three-year Nazi occupation, L'viv's local party newspaper, *Vil'na Ukraina,* printed a call by city housewives urging all women to enter industrial jobs:

> We call for all housewives in the city of L'viv immediately to participate in production and develop socialist competition. Successful reconstruction of our factories will be the best gift to soldiers and commanders of the Red

> Army, who defeated the fascist invaders by their powerful fists. Let's liquidate the remnants of the German economy. We, people in L'viv, serve our home town L'viv by ourselves!
>
> On behalf of 586 housewives-shockworkers in Zaliznychnyi raion, L'viv.[18]

Whether or not this proclamation was genuinely signed by women themselves, the call from the area that had a railway station presaged the transformation of L'viv women into Soviet women workers -- not mere housewives, but housewives *and* workers, with some even working like men in the railroad. The Soviet government used all means available to recruit women, young girls and housewives, into the labour force. Reports at the women's departments chronicled the ways in which housewives were recruited into the workplace. In cities, women's councils (zhinrady) at factories and housing registries organized meetings with housewives and factory workers and persuaded them to start working together. In addition, factory workers traveled to the countryside to meet young girls to encourage them to come to cities. A report from Shevchenkivs'kyi raion in the city of L'viv, which had shoe, confectionary, petroleum, and leather factories, stated that in the period of October to December 1946, 294 housewives were recruited and that some of them had already acquired "special skills."[19] L'viv railway station alone hired 80 housewives during the winter of 1945. [20]

Young women who were recruited from neighboring villages in groups often lived together in workers' dormitories. They were trained through occupational training schools (*fabrychno-zavods'ke navchannia*, or FZN) at factories. Local newspapers featured new workers under the title of, "We came to factories from villages," in which young girls were depicted as promising Soviet citizens determined to contribute to the industrialization of Western Ukraine. Formerly lacking any education, young girls and boys came to cities, quickly acquired professional skills at FZNs, and, within a few months, began working as lathe operators, spinners, locksmiths, or linotypists. Additionally, they contributed to rebuilding factories destroyed during the war.[21] Young workers living in dormitories had opportunities not only to study and discuss Marxism-Leninism but also to enjoy L'viv's new urban amenities including theatre, concerts, and movies. However, factories often did not have enough facilities to meet their workers' needs, and social services continued to be grossly inadequate throughout the postwar years. For example, an inspector's report of a L'viv oblast's state farm revealed that the workers' dormitory lacked a telephone and library, and that there were a range of "immoral behaviours" among young men and women at the dormitory. There was a guard at the territory of the state farm, but at night strangers from the nearby forest entered the dormitory and stayed overnight.[22]

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[18] *Vil'na Ukraina* 19 August 1944, p. 1.

[19] DALO, f. P-4, op.1, spr. 73, ark. 47.

[20] DALO, f. P-3, op.1, spr. 489, ark. 154 zv.

Women largely worked in light and food industries, the dominant industries in L'viv since the interwar period. The food industry included coffee and confectionary production, bakeries, meat processing, and flower mills. Light industry included clothing, knitwear, footwear, electric lamps, and batteries. The "Kirov" confectionary factory in L'viv, for instance, had more than 400 female workers. Another confectionary factory, "Bil'shovik," also boasted having hundreds of female workers. While new workers were increasingly recruited from nearby villages throughout the postwar period, the majority of women workers were still outsiders. An electric lamp factory in Chervonoarmiis'kyi raion, L'viv, had 701 female workers in late 1949, of which local women numbered only 283. Another electric lamp factory hired more than 900 female workers, of which one-third were recruited from local populations.[23] At the "Bil'shovik" confectionary factory, out of 270 stakhanovite workers, 90 came from the local population.[24]

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[21] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 27 October 1946, p. 5.

[22] DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 139, ark. 224.

While industrial workers were a largely new phenomenon in Western Ukraine, some white collar workers had held their jobs since the interwar period despite the wartime dislocations. At the L'viv postal office that employed 345 women workers, several female workers had been working for decades ranging from 18 to 35 years. These senior workers, a report claimed, exercised great authority among young workers and taught them about the job. In September 1948, the postal office celebrated the 50th birthday of three women along with their 35 years of service in the communication sector.[25]

Women also entered traditionally "male" industries such as coal mining and oil production. Boryslav, in Drohobych oblast, the center of the oil industry in Western

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[23] DALO, f. P-3, op.3, spr. 140, ark. 136.

[24] DALO, f. P-4, op.1, spr. 397, ark. 68.

[25] DALO, f. P-4, op.1, spr. 265, ark. 94.

Ukraine since the nineteenth century, experienced an onslaught of women workers in the postwar years.[26] Women in the mining industry, like *traktorystky* (women tractor drivers) in kolkhozy, often attracted much media attention as symbols of new Soviet women who performed work equal to men.[27] *Radian'ka zhinka*, the women's magazine that often featured stories of Western Ukrainian women in a series entitled, "women from Western oblasts talk," published a story about female coal miners. Ievgenia Mykhailovs'ka was 14 when she first wanted to work at Boryslav because her family was poor, but, according to her account, women were not allowed into such work at the time. It was only in 1940 (after the Soviets' first occupation of the region) that she began working at Boryslav. After the war, she soon returned to her job, and by this time many other young women began to join her. As she put it:

> Many of us heard about selfless work by women in Donbas. Their example inspired us to work in ozocerite mines. A fifty-three year old Eva Rudavets' was boiling wax at the ozocerite mine and every month she worked two and half times more than her norm. For the last seven months she earned 11,000 rubles. She is also teaching complicated procedures of wax boiling to twelve workers. [28]

A coal mine in Zolochiv, a city in L'viv oblast, had 135 women workers in 1948, out of whom nine female brigades were formed. Within a month, the number of female miners increased to 235, comprising 15 brigades, nine engaged in underground work and six above ground.[29]

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[26] As for the oil industry in Galicia, see John-Paul Himka, *Socialism in Galicia: the Emergence of Polish Social Democracy and Ukrainian Radicalism (1860-1890)* (Cambridge: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 1983), pp. 115-118; Alison Frank, "Austrian El Dorado: A History of the Oil Industry in Galicia, 1853-1923." Unpublished PhD dissertation (Harvard University, 2001).

[27] As for the representation of the female tractor driver as a symbol of the Soviet modernization and progress in agriculture, see Melanie Ilic, "Traktoristka: Representatons and Realities," in Melanie Ilic, ed., *Women in the Stalin Era* (New York: Palgrave, 2001): 110-130.

[28] *Radians'ka zhinka* , no. 1-2 (1947), p. 13.

Local Ukrainian women might have discredited such new Soviet women who worked as coal passers or wheelers. The women in the new Soviet Western territories often perceived the Soviet women and their work as perverted, unfeminine and unnatural. By so doing, women in the occupied territories showed their resistance to Soviet power and sought to maintain their national identity. A Polish woman who was exiled to Russia during the war wrote that Russian women's physical labour was beyond the strength of Polish and Ukrainian peasants, and portrayed such employment as a sign of Asiatic backwardness, in which women were treated as beasts.[30] In Western Ukraine, too, a teacher, who was a former member of *Soiuz ukrainok*, complained about the mother of one of her students. When the teacher asked the student why his mother could not come to school to talk with the teacher, the boy said, "my mother does not have time. She is working." "Are you her only child?" "No, we have four kids and I am the oldest." At this point she thought that the mother was a single mother and thus had to work so much. But the answer to her next question to the boy surprised her. "What does your father do?" "He is a commander." She was apparently shocked that the wife of a commander who, she supposed, would make enough money to support his family nonetheless let his wife work outside the home. The teacher was disgusted that the "new Soviet women" were obsessed with working outside the home. She heard other women saying that if they did not work, their husbands would become unhappy. The teacher concluded that "Soviet women were indifferent toward children's upbringing."[31] The perceptions of the Polish and Ukrainian women stand in stark contrast to those of the Russian women who, in the postwar period, did not consider it "unfeminine" for women to take on these male jobs.[32] In fact, the truth is that Western Ukrainian women, ironically, were already engaged in men's work before the Soviet regime arrived. For example, in the late nineteenth century, women were employed as ventilators at Boryslav. A mining inspector reported on the "indecent moral conditions" among workers, between married male workers from a nearby village and young women.[33]

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[29] DALO, f. P-3, op.2, spr. 499, ark. 48.

[30] Katherine R. Jolluck, *Exile and Identity: Polish Women in the Soviet Union during World War II* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2002), p. 262. For the Baltic women's response against Soviet working women, see Mara Lazda, "Gender, Ideology and Sovietization: Latvia 1940-1941," a paper presented at 34th AAASS convention (November 2002).

Descriptions of the successful coal miner Ievgenia Mykhailovs'ka and her admiration for fellow Donbas miners were designed not only to display the new Soviet women in masculine professions but also to foster a sense of unification of Ukrainian lands. People in the new Soviet territories were taught about advanced industry and exchanged their experiences with other workers through excursions to Eastern Ukraine and Moscow, and also through letters and appeals. Press and party organizations periodically organized appeals by women in Leningrad, Stalingrad, Kharkiv, Kiev, and Donbas to women in Western Ukraine in an attempt to build a strong bond between them. Exchanges of letters and experiences with women in other industrial cities were often introduced with the goal of heightening labour productivity. Donbas, as a land of freedom and industry, had a particularly strong impact and proved inspirational to many women, so that Donbas workers were often cited as ideal Soviet workers. A woman coal miner in L'viv, for instance, said, "I think we have to work like Donbas workers." [34]

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[31] Milena Rudnyts'ka, *Zakhidnia Ukraina pid bol'shevykamy* (New York: Shevchenko Scientific Society, 1958), pp. 84-89.

[32] Bucher, p. 141.

[33] Frank, p. 207.

In another attempt to raise labour productivity, the Soviet leadership continuously introduced socialist competitions and Stakhanovism. These competitions were usually linked to holidays and events: the Anniversary of the Russian Revolution, the Election to the Supreme Soviet, the Unification of Ukraine, and International Women's Day. Bond drives, a form of taxation in which people were expected to give the equivalent of one month's salary back to the regime, were also promoted together with these events. The campaign for higher productivity reached its peak in late 1947, when the Soviet state began a campaign "to finish the Five Year Plan within Four Years." At a workers' conference in November 1947, responding to this appeal by Makiivka and Leningrad women, L'viv women workers stated:

> Nobody wants to lag behind the Leningraders....L'viv's industrial output has superseded the pre-war level. With this achievement, now we can extend our hand to glorious Leningraders and tell them dear comrades, we respond to your call, we, like you, like any other working class of our country, give our energies and power for earlier completion of the Five Year Plan – within four years.[35]

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[34] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 19 March 1945, p. 5.

[35] DALO, f. P-3, op. 2, spr. 525, ark 55.

At the height of the campaign for "the Five Year Plan within Four Years!" on 19 April 1948, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine issued a decree on "Measures of Improvement of Work among Women in Ukraine," which shortly thereafter was featured on the front page of the main republican newspaper, *Radians'ka Ukraina.*[36] The decree was designed to strengthen the industrialization of Ukraine and urged all Ukrainian women to participate actively in the political, economic and social spheres, under the slogan of "complete the Fourth Five Year Plan in four years!" It directly mentioned the slow pace of building a socialist economy in Western Ukraine, a process in which women's participation was indispensable, and criticized the problems of Western Ukrainian women lagging behind their counterparts in Eastern Ukraine. The decree of 19 April subsequently dictated gender policies in Western Ukraine for a number of years, emphasizing above all women's productive ability: how a female worker could exceed her quota, and how she contributed to the socialist economy at newly constructed factories and collective farms. Reports by women's departments were filled with descriptions of excellent female stakhanovites and their record-breaking productivity.

Despite the bombastic productivity campaign, it became clear that women workers were not treated particularly well in exchange for their record-breaking productivity levels. Women's own reports were often very candid about the low number of women in leading positions and attributed it to lack of interest in promoting women among the factory management and local party organizations. The employment of large numbers of women workers in some factories did not necessarily mean that women were promoted to higher positions. In the postwar Soviet Union, despite the high number of female employees, the percentage of women in managerial positions declined. During the war, the number of women acting as chairmen of kolkhozy and factory directors reached significant proportions, with women accounting for 2.6% of the total in 1940, increasing to 14.2% in 1943, but then declining to 11.8% in 1944 and 8.1% in 1945.[37] Returning soldiers were invariably the leading cause for this decline. In Ukraine, too, the problem of the shrinking women cadre was discussed by party leaders. The Ministry of Trade of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic reported that in Ukraine as a whole, the proportion of women in the trade sector dropped from 19.7% in 1946 to 17.5% in 1948.[38] At the meeting of women's department chairs from all the Western Ukrainian oblasts, held in Kiev in December 1947, the chairs discussed in depth the seriousness of the problem of the declining female cadre. The chair of the Transcarpathia women's department argued that during the first months following the unification of Transcarpathia and Soviet Ukraine, the issue of the promotion of local women for leading positions had attracted much attention, but that this agenda had subsequently lagged behind. The party was more interested in economic issues in the oblast than in the issue of women's promotion. She went on to criticize the Ministry of Education for not working on the problem of peasant women's illiteracy -- a key factor in women's lower status.[39] A report on factories in Western Ukrainian cities confirms this problem at the level of individual factories. The Bolshevik confectionary factory had 355 female workers, but only five women in leading positions. Similarly, an electric lamp factory had only 43 out of 876 women in administrative and leading engineering positions.[40] Furthermore, instead of promoting women, factory managers sometimes acted to the contrary. The chief of a production line at L'viv's macaroni factory did not offer any helpful advice to two female masters; instead, he insulted their work on a daily basis.[41] At a sewing artel, "Red Hat," women brigadiers were forced to quit their jobs, while the director hired male workers, one after another, who "did not understand cutting at all."[42]

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[36] *Radians'ka Ukraina*, 23 April 1948, p. 1.

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[37] Norton T. Dodge, *Women in the Soviet Economy: Their Role in Economic, Scientific, and Technical Development* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1966), p. 202.

[38] TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 73, spr. 3, ark. 51.

[39] TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 23, spr. 4580, ark. 3.

Thus, despite the fact that women's entry into industry played an important role in the industrialization of Western Ukraine, the state's attempt to break entrenched gender barriers among local officials, managers and workers in order to promote women for leading positions was often unsuccessful. The reasons for this lack of success varied from male prejudice and lack of education among women to lack of social services for working mothers, which will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

Collectivization

The proportion of women working in agriculture was very high in the Soviet Union. According to the 1959 census, about 55 % of all working women were engaged in agriculture. Undoubtedly, the proportion of women in agriculture was higher in postwar Western Ukraine, where industrialization had just started and the economy still remained primarily agrarian. Reports by women's departments cited even higher figures for women in agriculture. In 1950, in the three oblasts of L'viv, Volhynia, and Drohobych, women constituted more than 60%, some nearly 70%, of agricultural labour.[43]

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[40] DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 554, ark. 19.

[41] DALO, f. P-4, op. 1, spr. 397, ark. 55.

[42] DALO, f. P-4, op. 1, spr. 324, ark. 13.

While collectivization in Western Ukraine followed the general pattern set out in the rest of the Soviet Union some twenty years earlier, there were important differences.[44] The collectivization of Western lands was accompanied not by famine that plagued Eastern Ukraine in the 1930s, but by the armed resistance of the Ukrainian Nationalists. Because of the severity of their resistance, it was only in 1947-48, after the Soviet power drove out the OUN-UPA forces to a considerable extent, that collectivization fully got underway. Women very likely participated in this resistance. Available sources do not confirm that Western Ukrainian women engaged in collective resistance known in Russian as *bab'i bunty*, in which peasant women, by playing the role of ignorant, irrational, and illiterate *baba*, may have manipulated official images of themselves for their own political purposes, and got away with subversive activities more easily than their male counterparts.[45] Yet, lack of information certainly does not mean that there was no women's resistance. At the same time, if there was collective resistance among women, this might not have been recognized as *bab'i bunty*. The confrontation between the state and peasantry assumed the form of a full-fledged civil war between Soviet NKVD operatives and organized national resistance groups.

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[43] TsDAHO f. 1, op. 74, spr. 21, ark. 200; f. 1, op. 24, spr. 1506, ark. 170; DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 499, ark 197. Also, according to the 1950 report by the Drohobych women's department, women constituted 33.8 % of industrial workers in the region. TsDAHO, f.1, op. 74, spr. 21, ark. 249.

[44] For details, see Marples, *Stalinism in Ukraine in the 1940s.*

[45] Lynn Viola, "Bab'i Bunty and Peasant Women's Protest during Collectivization," in Beatrice Farnsworth and Lynne Viola, eds., *Russian Peasant Women* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 189-205.

By contrast, there were women who supported collectivization because of the difficulties of working conditions, and some young women in particular supported collectivization enthusiastically. The Soviet administration used these women, through women's councils, to encourage other peasants to join kolkhozy. Local newspapers also served to publicize the modernization of agriculture in gender specific ways by printing special articles, such as "Girls, to the Tractor!" As well, Pasha Angelina's article "for all young kolkhoznitsy in Soviet Ukraine" and her book "People on the Kolkhoz" were widely publicized and read among women at meetings.[46] Female activists asserted the superiority of the kolkhoz to an independent peasantry at seminars and meetings. After such meetings, they collected signatures by attendants to join the kolkhoz. There was a trip organized to visit a kolkhoz in Moscow or Kiev. Upon returning, peasant women and men reported their impressions of Eastern Ukraine at local meetings and encouraged others to join the kolkhoz. Eva Nos, one such woman, was a kolkhoz field team leader and chair of the women's council in Novo-Myrians'kyi raion in L'viv oblast. She frequently appeared in the party documents. She described to her audience at a local women's meeting how she was impressed by a fellow kolkhoznitsa in Kiev.

> I met a Kievan kolkhoznitsa, Olena Khobta and heard her speech. Her words impressed me. How could such an old woman make such a success in the kolkhoz? Why cannot we do the same? I am organizing the first kolkhoz in my village. I am fifty years old, but when working at the

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[46] DALO, f. P-2, op. 3, spr. 131, ark 14; TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 24, spr. 1506, ark 96.

> kolkhoz I feel rejuvenated. Now I am a kolkhoz field brigade leader and elected as a deputy for the local soviet. Do not listen to the whispers of kulaks but join the kolkhoz. This is our life.[47]

Under the difficult material conditions in postwar society, the promise of material benefit often appeared to be more attractive than socialist ideology in and of itself. The official press encouraged women to speak on how life would change under the kolkhoz. At a women's conference, a female field team leader, who would soon become a kolkhoz chairwoman, said; "Our kolkhoz workers live wealthily. I had earned 420 labour days and received 6,000 kilos of potatoes. Our village is located at the border and the evil Germans destroyed everything in 1941. Only now, thanks to kolkhoz life, sixty kolkhoz workers built new houses. We have clubs, a kolkhoz administration building, and a village soviet. Our village has electricity and each house has a radio."[48] Women's departments' reports were filled with women's activism in collectivization. In Ternopil' oblast, according to the 1947 reports, 37 out of 265 kolkhozy were organized by women activists.[49] In L'viv oblast, 163 kolkhozy out of 565 were established by women's initiatives during the period 1948-49, of which 63 were established only during the first three months of 1948. Five kolkhozy were created in honor of International Women's Day, so they were named "March eighth."[50]

As discussed in Chapter Two, the chairs of women's councils in the countryside were in particular danger of being targeted by the Ukrainian nationalists. In one report in the L'viv obkom women's department, eleven women were listed as "organizers of a kolkhoz," out of which four women, including Mariia Mats'ko, were described as "killed."[51] In Bibrs'kyi raion, the house of a chair of a women's council who began organizing kolkhoz in her village was burned down and she herself was sought for execution by the OUN-UPA. In another case, the 16-year-old son of a women's council chair and field team leader was killed.[52] Some women activists were active not only in organizing kolkhozy, thus unavoidably being targeted by the Ukrainian nationalists, but also in voluntarily exposing kulaks and nationalists. They were outspoken in condemning nationalists and kulaks at public meetings and, as a result, were targeted. A women's council in Rivne oblast helped to expose a kulak who pretended to be a kolkhoz member and stole grain.[53] In L'viv, a woman activist disclosed the identities of 48 rebels over the course of 1945-46.[54]

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[47] DALO, f. P-3, op. 2, spr. 499, ark. 2.

[48] DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 131, ark.3.

[49] TsDAHO, f.1, op. 23, spr. 4580, ark. 2.

[50] DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 139, ark. 245. TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 74, spr. 6, ark. 165.

The OUN-UPA resistance definitely hindered collectivization, the progress of which actually depended on how active the OUN-UPA was in each oblast. Collectivization did not proceed at the same speed in all Western regions. In Chernivtsi, Transcarpathia, and Volhynia oblasts, collectivization was declared to have been completed by the end of 1949, whereas it was achieved more slowly in Stanyslav,

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[51] DALO, f. P-3, op. 2, spr. 499, ark. 40.

[52] DALO, f. P-3, op. 2, spr. 499, ark. 27.

[53] TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 24, spr. 1506, ark, 82-83. There was also an incident in which a former kulak sneaked into kolkhoz accounting work and messed up the calculation of labour days.

[54] DALO, f. P-3, op. 2, spr. 499, ark. 27.

Drohobych, Ternopil', Rivne and L'viv oblasts.[55] The reports by women activists support this argument. In 1948-1949, there were 565 kolkhozy in L'viv oblast, which constituted only 39% of households or 34% of all lands.[56] On the other hand, in 1950 in Volhynia oblast, there were 1019 kolkhozy that included 99% of agricultural households. Moreover, the slow pace of collectivization was reflected in the under-representation of female collective workers at women's conferences. Hrushets'kyi, the L'viv obkom's first secretary, reported to Khrushchev on the gradual success of collectivization by citing the number of kolkhoz women at conferences. At the first L'viv oblast women's conference in the spring of 1945, there was only one female kolkhoz participant who was actually from Eastern Ukraine. Then the 1947 conference saw 21 kolkhoz women, and at the 1948 conference the number had increased to 225.[57]

Once a kolkhoz was formed, there were problems, as experienced elsewhere in the Soviet Union, pertaining to female labour, foremost among them being the problem of women in leadership positions. Such positions for women included acting as field team leader, brigade team leader, milkmaid, pig-tender, or head of a livestock farm. In early 1948, out of 1,162 field team leaders in L'viv oblast, 1,046 were women.[58] Although kolkhoz chairwomen were very rare, they did exist in Western Ukraine, but in many cases, were outsiders and tended to be young women in their late twenties and thirties. At the kolkhoz "Komsomolets'" in Rivne oblast, the chair was a 32-year-old woman from Poltava. This kolkhoz had 69 members, out of which 40 were women. In contrast, when describing the achievements and cadres of women from the local population, the Soviet reports tended to focus on older women in their fifties or sixties. Uliana Bashtyk, chair of the Lenin kolkhoz at Sokal's'kyi raion, L'viv oblast, was 52 years old. For her achievement, she was awarded a "Hero of Socialist Labour" medal. She was a former farmhand and worked for a Polish landlord until 1939. Another local kolkhoz chairwoman at the *Free Ukraine* kolkhoz in Krasnens'kyi raion, L'viv oblast, was 50 years old. [59] A 56-year-old woman, Ksenia, lived with her seven children after her husband was killed by Ukrainian nationalists, and she was a member of the kolkhoz administration.[60]

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[55] Marples, p. 111.

[56] DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 139, ark. 245. Another report, submitted around the same time in early 1949, said that there were 569 kolkhozy that is 40 % of households. DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 131, ark. 15.

[57] DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 488, ark. 14

[58] DALO, f. P-3, op. 2, spr. 449, ark. 32.

As in industry, the size of the women's cadre in agriculture contracted in the immediate postwar years, an indication that returning soldiers took over leading positions at the kolkhoz. In Ukraine as a whole, according to a document of the Central Committee, the percentage of female chairs of kolkhoz dropped from 3.4% in 1945 to 0.8% in 1947.[61] For example, in Volhynia oblast, in 1950, there were more than 200,000 female kolkhoz workers for 1,019 kolkhozy, of which the number of female kolkhoz chairs was only twelve, constituting only 1.1% of all chairs, even though the report also mentioned that 180 kolkhozy were created on the initiative of women. Obviously, women's efforts in this regard did not translate fully into positions in the kolkhoz.[62] In L'viv, too, more than 200 kolkhozy were organized by women, but there were only eleven chairwomen.[63] Throughout the postwar period, the number of kolkhozy greatly varied because the Soviet authorities launched an amalgamation campaign, in which small kolkhozy were merged so that eventually the number of kolkhozy and chairs declined drastically. But, on average, the number of female chairs did not rise above two digits in Western Ukraine, and only slightly higher in Eastern Ukraine. According to the 1950 reports, there were twelve chair women in Volhynia oblast and nine in Drohobych oblast.[64] Although the report from the Drohobych obkom secretary stated that all of the 175 women in leading positions, including kolkhoz chair, brigadier, chair of the livestock, chair of the poultry farm, and chair of consumers' cooperatives, were from the local population, this appears to have been exceptional.[65] By comparison with the proportion of local women in industry, women in agriculture may have had better chances for promotion, but this was solely due to the larger absolute number of women in agriculture. Compared with male outsiders, local males, and female outsiders, local women were the most under-represented group in both the agricultural and industrial cadres.

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[59] DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 131, ark. 18.

[60] TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 75, spr. 83, ark 23.

[61] TsDAHO, f.1, op. 75, spr. 208, ark 3.

In regard to labour discipline, complaints sent to the women's departments were often about the lack of women's productivity and the behaviour of the families of kolkhoz administrators. Some women did not work well because their husbands were employed in the cities and they therefore did not need to work hard. Other women used kolkhoz day care in order to shop for groceries or do housework.[66] Wives and daughters of kolkhoz chairs were often criticized because their labour days were insufficient, and in some cases completely non-existent.[67] Although reports almost never mentioned ethnic tension between local Western Ukrainian women and outsiders, given the fact that a considerable number of kolkhoz chairs were newcomers, local women would likely have felt uncomfortable with the Easterners who made up much of Western Ukraine's privileged class.[68]

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[62] TsDAHO, f.1, op. 74, spr. 21, ark 200.

[63] DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 499, ark. 169.

[64] TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 74, spr. 21, ark. 200; f. 1, op. 24, spr. 1506, ark. 170.

[65] TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 74, spr. 21, ark. 53.

Working and Living Conditions for Women

The integration of women into the labour force, which was central to the industrialization of Western Ukraine, raised concerns regarding working and living conditions. The Soviet Union encouraged women's participation in productive labour, and Soviet welfare programs were intended to maximize labour productivity. When the Soviet government launched pronatalist programs in the late 1930s, its goal was to provide facilities and incentives that would not only encourage women to enter the workforce but also to give birth to more children. These obviously contradictory goals reached a peak during the Second World War and immediate postwar period, when Soviet officials had to use women in both the reproductive sphere -- to produce future workers -- as well as in the productive sphere, to bolster the labour force for postwar reconstruction. Therefore, the state had to provide facilities and benefits to encourage women not only to have many children but also to get them back to work after childbirth. Facilities such as public child care, communal dining, and communal housekeeping devices, though never adequately provided, appear to have been popular and important incentives for women to start paid work. The availability of child care outside the home was particularly important as the authorities were aware that the lack of appropriate child care facilities was a major obstacle to women's promotion into cadre positions. The Soviet state widely committed to construct child care facilities, in stark contrast to the Western countries, where the institutionalization of child care encountered resistance because it was thought to create higher numbers of working mothers.[69] In November 1944, soon after the implementation of the 1944 Family Code, which launched the militaristic campaign for "Mothers with Many Children," the Ukrainian Politburo issued a decree about enlarging the network of child-care institutions. By 1946, when the Fourth Five Year Plan began and women started to enter the workforce, the building of day care centers took on added urgency.

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[66] DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 557, ark. 26.

[67] DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 556, ark. 144, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 499, ark 119; DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 559, ark. 26. There was an attitude among peasants that wives of kolkhoz administrations were not supposed to work because their husbands alone earned the labourdays both for himself and his wife. Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Stalin's Peasant: Resistance and Survival in the Russian Village after Collectivization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 146.

[68] How these Easterners constituted L'viv's upper class, see William Risch, "Ukraine's Window to the West: Identity and Cultural Uncomformity, 1953-75," Unpublished PhD dissertation (Ohio State University, 2001). p.120.

While ethnic differences as well as gender difference were important factors in terms of Western Ukrainian women's promotion for cadre positions, ethnic difference does not appear to have affected the issue of child care facilities. All female workers, regardless of their ethnicity, faced the same problem in finding appropriate child care and social services. Conversely, city dwellers who had recently moved from the countryside and particularly women from elsewhere in the Soviet Union may have faced more disadvantages because these newcomers did not have grandmothers at home who traditionally took care of small children.

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[69] Sonya Michel, "The Limits of Maternalism: Policies toward American Wage-Earning Mothers during the Progressive Era," in Seth Koven and Sonya Michel eds., *Mothers of a New World: Maternalist Politics and the Origins of Welfare States* (New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 280.

The Soviets' commitment fell far short of the government's goals due to shortages of materials and to apathy among the local officials and factory administrators. During the period of reconstruction, it was difficult to secure space and materials for child care and these scarce resources were often used for rebuilding schools, hospitals, or factories rather than child care institutions.[70] However, the problem was not simply "lack of space." *Vil'na Ukraina* published a "letter to the editors" by a "parents' committee" in which concerned parents, many working mothers, complained about the city official's unreasonable refusal of parents' request to convert a vacant house into a kindergarten.[71] A report from a L'viv factory revealed that many female workers lived in terrible conditions. Many of them had two or three children, often nursing, and were employed in low-paid jobs. There was no nursing room. Even if such possibilities existed, nobody took the initiative to solve such labour issues.[72] A woman organizer in Stalins'kyi raion in the city L'viv reported that there were several clothing and stocking factories that, despite the large number of female workers, did not have kindergarten or day care; therefore, working mothers could not work. In this raion, there were more than 100 applications from mothers who wanted to place their children in day care or kindergarten, and the mothers came to the education office every day but did not receive reasonable treatment.[73] Another woman organizer at Chervonoarmiis'kyi raion in the city of L'viv reported that the day care situation for working mothers was far from satisfactory. Moreover, in this raion, 40% of children at day cares were believed to be children of single mothers.[74]

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[70] DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 557, ark 27. f. P-4, op. 1, spr. 397, ark 103.

[71] *Vil'na Ukraina* 25 April 1947 p. 7. A similar complaint by a women's organizer in Velyko-Mostivs'kyi raion said that she found a 4-room house for day care and asked for the raion officials for it, but they did not permit its use. DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 555, ark 160.

[72] DALO, f. P-3, op. 2, spr. 292, ark 195.

The issue of day care was no less crucial for peasant women. The availability of day care, particularly on a seasonal basis, was the most important factor facilitating women to join the kolkhoz.[75] A number of reports from kolkhozy argued that because of the lack of day care, women could not go to work.[76] Especially since 1947, when collectivization began in full swing, the construction of seasonal day care took on new urgency in party circles, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, and women's departments. Every spring, before the spring sowing season began, especially around International Women's Day, the Soviet authorities issued a number of directives concerning seasonal day care for kolkhozy. For example, on 8 March 1948, the Ministry of Education issued a decree ordering a massive construction plan of child care institutions all over Ukraine. While addressing the entire country, this decree again specified the lagging situation in Western Ukraine,[77] and a series of decrees on child care in this region produced some results. In Transcarpathia, the number of seasonal day care centers was more than doubled within a year while the number of permanent day cares increased only slightly.[78] But, overall, the grandiose construction promises were not achieved. In the summer of 1949, in all Ukraine the construction of seasonal day cares only met the needs of 161,250 children, only 38% of the planned figure of 412,000. The L'viv oblast constructed a network of nurseries for 2,008 children, while the original plan was for 5,600, achieving only 33% of its goal. Five raions out of L'viv's 31 (excluding the city L'viv) were said to have no day care system.[79] However, L'viv's 33% was still better than 17%, 21%, and 23% of Zhytomyr, Chernihiv, and Sumy oblasts, in Eastern Ukraine, respectively.[80]

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[73] DALO, P-4, op. 1, spr. 397, ark 9-10.

[74] DALO, P-4, op. 1, spr. 324, ark 43.

[75] TsDAHO, 1, op. 75, spr.7, ark 127.

[76] DALO, P-3, op. 1, spr.489, ark 220.

Together with the enlargement of nursery networks, the March decree for child care also provided a plan of food rations for children. The state supplied 94,000 children, whose seasonal preschool was under construction, with 133,000 kilograms of soap and 27,600 kilograms of sugar or sweets. The Ministry of the Food Industry prepared a list of food and material supplies for one child: this list included 300 grams of bread per day, 200 grams of fruit per day, 1,200 grams of meat or fish per month, 500 grams of sweets or sugar, 500 grams of macaroni, 150 grams of cheese, 6 liters of milk per month, 10 eggs per month, and the list went on. However, most child care institutions lacked food as well as basic inventories such as books, toys, and furniture. The postwar food supply was rationed until 1950. Extra rations for child care institutions also often disappeared in the course of delivery.[81]

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[77] TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 74, spr. 3, ark. 47-50.

[78] TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 24, spr. 1506, ark. 38.

[79] DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 140, ark. 29.

[80] TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 74, spr. 12, ark. 62.

The problems relating to working women and child care were discussed not only among inner party circles but also in public, indicating public awareness of this serious issue. A group of working mothers complained about the hours at a grocery store and day care center: when a woman left her work place at 6 o'clock, the grocery stores were already closed, so how could a working mother manage to fulfill both her duties?[82] Another mother complained that the day care should be open until 7 or 8 o'clock so that she would not have to hurry to pick up her child immediately after she finished her work at 6 o'clock.[83] Was there any children's barber open on Sunday? [84]

While the full-fledged consumer culture and arrival of time-saving household devices would have to wait until the 1960s, the awareness of time-saving devices for housekeeping was already spreading.[85] Local provinces such as Western Ukraine were far behind the new technologies in Moscow or Leningrad, but the information was circulated and devices for housekeeping slowly arrived.

The Central Committee decree on "Enlargement of Network of Laundry in Cities in Ukraine," issued on 1 June 1949, appeared to promise a new "revolutionary" stage of women's housekeeping duties even in Western Ukraine.[86] Upon planning to introduce a washing machine from a Kharkiv factory, the Central Committee in Kiev told Mariia Kikh, the chair of the L'viv women's department that the "washing machine for home has a very important meaning for improving women's household work," and sent reports on what women in Kharkiv had experienced with the new devices. The Kharkiv women were amazed at how quickly and cleanly the new washing machine washed their clothes. One woman said that she brought 1.7 kilograms of laundry at 10:30 in the evening, and after two hours she finished the laundry and returned home. If she had to wash all the clothes by herself at home, it would have taken her several nights and weekends. However, the new technology was costly. In Kharkiv, it cost 1 ruble 70 kopek per kilogram, while in Moscow it cost only 80 kopek per kilogram, so that the Kharkiv officials hoped to reduce the price to 50 kopek by 1950. A report from Kharkiv assured L'viv that introduction of the mechanized laundry facilities in the countryside would be a "real revolution for women."[87]

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[81] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 24 October 1945, p. 2.

[82] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 12 October 1945, p. 5.

[83] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 24 October 1945, p. 7.

[84] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 28 December1945, p. 6.

[85] Susan Reid, "Cold War in the Kitchen: Gender and the De-Stalinization of Consumer Taste in the Soviet Union under Khrushchev," *Slavic Review* vol. 61, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 1-20.

However, the construction of the promising time saving device did not proceed well in L'viv, which frustrated Kikh. Following the decree, L'viv planned to build two laundries and thirty rental offices in 1949, and an additional eight laundries and forty rental offices in 1950. In early 1950, however, the construction of only two laundries was completed, and they were not in operation because of electricity problems. There were eleven rental offices in the city of L'viv that leased carpenter's tools (axes, shovels, and saws) and provided washing machines and even vacuum cleaners.[88] The operation of rental offices was also far from satisfactory. In her letter to the obkom first secretary, Hrushets'kyi, Kikh claimed that the opening of a laundromat at the housing registry would "contribute to the improvement of the housekeeping labour of women," but it was not achieved because of the irresponsible attitude of the chair of the oblast department of communal economy.[89] In Uzhhorod, Transcarpathia oblast, too, there was a laundromat in operation, but it hardly satisfied the needs of the people and three more domestic washing machines were to be added.

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[86] DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 489, ark. 51.

[87] DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 489, ark. 49-52

The expansion of public bathhouses was also discussed. A secretary at a local soviet in L'viv countryside said that his raion's "big problem" was its lack of a bathhouse at the kolkhoz.[90] In Transcarpathia oblast, the capacity of the bathhouse was 269 people per hour, and the city Berehovo was planning a new bathhouse with 30 persons hourly, in the city Vynohradiv for 20 people, and Khust for 20 people. In the city of Uzhhorod, female deputies at a local soviet proposed to convert one of the bathhouses into a women's shower room for 30 people. Such projects were usually handled by the communal department of the city soviet, but the women organizers felt that the women's department should work together with trade unions for the protection of the female labour and improvement of women's *byt* (daily life).[91]

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[88] DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 559, ark. 84.

[89] DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 691, ark. 15, 45.

[90] DALO, f. P-3, op. 2, spr. 524, ark. 136.

[91] TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 24, spr. 1506, ark. 39-40.

Living, working, and material conditions improved only slowly. Meanwhile, Soviet administrators found a way to compensate for the state's shortcomings in social services by using unpaid labour by women, mostly housewives, not only for household chores but also for public services. The obshchestvennitsa, wives' movement, founded in the 1930s, did not disappear throughout the war. Instead, it in fact seems to have expanded during the war. In post-war Western Ukraine, similarly to the original movement in the 1930s, the movement was a mostly urban phenomenon. In cities, the housewives organized themselves in groups with various names; obshchestvennitsa, Red Cross, charity committees, parents' committees, as well as women's councils (zhensovety), but their activities resembled each other and overlapped. The women activists engaged in a variety of work, including organizing concerts to raise money to buy toys, clothes, shoes, and books for children and war-orphans, and furniture for day cares.[92] In the immediate postwar period, the problem of war-orphans was serious and the party discussed "homeless" or "neglected" children, who were possibly as numerous as during the Russian Civil War in the 1920s.[93] In 1948, there were 92,424 orphans in all Ukraine, and between November 1947 and May 1948, 24,548 homeless children were placed in children's homes. Often, these children did have parents, but the parents could not take care of them and the children were hanging around on the street. The "parent committee" in L'viv provided shoes, clothing, and free food for

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[92] TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 74, spr. 7, ark. 93.

[93] For the problem of millions of homeless children during the Russian Revolution and the Civil War, see Wendy Goldman, *Women, State and Revolution: Soviet Family Policy and Social Life, 1917-1936* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 59-100.

1,276 orphans.[94]

In late 1947, as collectivization and industrialization were accelerating, the obshchestvennitsa movement was deeply involved in the politics of productivity. L'viv's wives' movement was reinvigorated by the fellow obshchestvennitsa in the city Makiivka, Stalino oblast, where wives sent a letter to Kaganovich and Khrushchev outlining their commitment to their duties as obshchestvennitsa. The publication of the letter in a newspaper inspired the L'viv women and they decided to follow the Makiivka women's example. The move was in accord with both the thirtieth anniversary of the October Revolution and the election for the local soviet at the end of the year. A first response was issued by a group of housewives at a housing registry in L'viv, Zolochiv, and Brody, and later it became an all-oblast movement, holding a conference with 250 participants in late November. The wife activists declared to all women activists that their mission was to bring a "cultured appearance" to the factory dormitory and residence, and to help war veterans and their families. The L'viv first secretary, Hrushets'kyi, had proudly informed Kaganovich how the wives' movement expanded from Makiivka to L'viv.[95] The minutes of the obshchestvennitsa conference are interesting in that the wife activists perceived their identities in terms of their relationships to male family members rather than with working women. There was a clear divide between working women and housewives. Obshchestvennitsa women praised female workers for their achievement of high productivity, but when they talked about their own duties, the wives' discourse revolved around their relationships to their husbands, not their relationships to female workers:

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[94] TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 74, spr. 3, ark. 104.

[95] DALO, f. P-3, op. 2, spr. 150, ark. 41.

> In order to complete the Five Year Plan in four years, above all it is important to create normal living conditions for workers, bring comfort, cleanliness and order, and take care of stakhanovite workers. Who can do these jobs better than a woman who is a mother and a housewife? She has a special sense; the wife of a coal miner keeps a cultured and sanitary dormitory. This really helps husbands, brothers, and fathers to complete the Five Year Plan within four years. [96]

While praising their own activities, the obshchestvennitsa criticized some of the women's councils at a sewing factory and artel' named "March eighth" (both should have had many female workers) where workers' dormitories were not repaired, not clean, and uncomfortable. They complained that women's councils at these factories were not actively reciprocating the appeal by the Makiivka women. "Wives of workers and engineers, if they are not working, should take care of their husbands at factories in order to fulfill the production plan." However, they do not seem to have realized that women's councils at factories consisted of working women, not like housing registries, the majority of which consisted of non-working housewives in the neighbourhood. Who would be cleaning female dormitories and decorating canteens with flowers or table cloths, if the majority of workers were full-time female workers? Women workers or non-working housewives? In the official Soviet mass media women workers were always praised for their record-breaking productivity, but not for cleaning dormitories or decorating canteens. The portrayal of female stakhanovites seemed to be void of their maternal and domestic duties. On the other hand, there was a group of women who engaged exclusively in domestic chores as obshchestvennitsa. However, as inner party documents show, the working women were also struggling to combine their paid work and domestic duties, which was not always widely acknowledged.

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[96] DALO, f. P-3, op. 2, spr. 525, ark. 55-60.

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Women's participation in the labour force is the most important principle in the Marxist conception of the "emancipation of women." In Western Ukraine, in order to eradicate the patriarchal social order, the Soviet state was extensively committed to promoting women's entry into the labour force to the Soviet state's political and economic purposes. Indeed, women's economic independence gradually became the norm and grew to be one of the most important Soviet legacies in post-Soviet society. At the same time, however, due to the extreme impact of the Second World War, the state realized that it could not provide enough social services to its citizens, especially women workers. Therefore, instead of providing comprehensive social facilities, the Soviet state semi-officially encouraged women's non-paid work not only at home but in the workplace. As well as paid labour, women's non-paid work was given public meaning and played an integral role in postwar reconstruction and sovietization in Western Ukraine. The pattern common elsewhere in the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s, in which the implementation of the proletarian ideology of women's emancipation was followed by neoconservative Stalinism, differed in Western Ukraine. Upon the arrival of the Soviet regime in Western Ukraine, Soviet power had merged these two ideologies and sought to impose them simultaneously. Although Soviet official discourse never openly endorsed this state of affairs, all of the points raised in this chapter demonstrate that the Soviet authorities did indeed pursue, and promote, both ideologies in a variety of ways.

Chapter Four

Maternalism Soviet Style:

The Campaign for the "Mothers with Many Children" in Western Ukraine

Introduction: Maternalism vs. Paternalism

The scholarship on maternalism inquires into the relationship between the development of the welfare state and gender, and encourages comparative study in diverse geographic, cultural, and political settings.[1] As a result of comparative and interdisciplinary examinations of how and to what degree women's social reform efforts succeeded in shaping state welfare policies -- particularly towards mothers and children -- many scholars have uncovered "gendered" welfare states. Recently, from its original focus on Western European and North American countries, this scholarship has expanded its horizons beyond the traditional borders of the "West." However, these studies have almost completely overlooked the socialist societies of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.[2] Maternalism constitutes a very different discourse in a Soviet historical context than in an American or Western European one, where the maternalist discourse involves the exploration of women's activism, lobbying groups, and the ideology of the "male breadwinner." In the Soviet Union, by contrast, the society was socialist, not capitalist, and had neither autonomous lobby groups and a feminist movement nor the notion of the "male breadwinner."

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[1] For the scholarship on maternalism, see Koven and Sonya Michel eds., *Mothers of a New World: Maternalist Politics and the Origins of Welfare States* (New York: Routledge, 1993); Gisela Bock and Pat Thane, eds., *Maternity and Gender Policies: Women and the Rise of the European Welfare States, 1880s - 1950s* (London: Routledge, 1991).

[2] For example, the special issue of *Journal of Women's History*, vol. 5, no. 2 (Fall 1993) that featured "Maternalism as a Paradigm" includes the case studies of Imperial Russia and Modern Japan, but does not address socialist societies. An excellent Western comparative literature on "maternalism" (footnote 1 above) still limits its scope to Western Europe and North America. The existing works on Soviet welfare policies do not place their discussion of family and child welfare services into gender perspective. See Bernice A. Madison, *Social Welfare in the Soviet Union* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968); Gaston V. Rimilinger, *Welfare Policy and Industrialization in Europe, America, and Russia* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1971).

Scholars who have analyzed the nature of domination and subordination in socialist societies have tended to interpret paternalism as endemic to state socialism.[3] For example, Katherine Verdery argues that socialist systems legitimized themselves with the claim that they redistributed the total national product in the interests of the general welfare. The Communist Party, in a paternal guise, acted as a "wise father" and made all the family's allocative decisions as to who should produce what and who should receive what reward, so that rewards were not granted as rights or given in exchange for something else, but provided as amenities. Subjects were presumed not to be politically active, but rather to be grateful recipients -- like small children in a family -- of the benefits that their rulers had decided to give them. Emphasising a quasi-familial dependency, "socialist paternalism" posited a moral tie linking subjects with the state through their right to a share in the state's redistribution system. [4]

However, socialist paternalism was not without disruptions and modifications. Recent studies have shown the complexities of the encounter between Soviet power and society, an encounter characterised by interplay and negotiation, and not by simple domination and subordination, thus further problematising the traditional perception of Soviet society, particularly during the period of Stalinism, as "monolithic." Moreover, one of the new thrusts since the 1990s has been the attempt to explain the Soviet experiment in its comparative context and to show that the Soviet practices were not totally unlike those of Western democratic societies. Shaped by the experience of the First World War, the interwar process that was characterized by the spread of mass culture, mass politics, mass consumption, and welfare policies unavoidably affected the Soviet Union.[5] Faced with industrialization, the spread of birth control and abortion methods, and the eventual decline of the population growth rates, governments increasingly started to intervene in population management. In terms of the types of maternal welfare policies implemented, in such fields as hygiene, health, day care centres, children's allowance, and maternity leaves, Stalinist pronatalism appears strikingly similar to strategies pursued in many Western European countries during the interwar period.[6] However, in the Soviet context, these policies were geared toward achieving greater control over labour and maximizing production, regardless of how many children women had. The fundamental premise of Soviet women's policies involved the incorporation of women into the wage labour system, the democratisation of the patriarchal family, the communalization of housework, and the elimination of gender discrepancies. The feature most clearly distinguishing Soviet policy was the principle of paid women's work, whereas Western European maternalist policies were usually intended to keep women out of waged labour and to strengthen the traditional family with a male breadwinner.

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[3] Lewis H. Siegelbaum, "Dear Comrade, You Ask what We Need: Socialist Paternalism and Soviet Rural 'Notables' in the mid-1930s," *Slavic Review*, vol. 57, no. 1 (spring: 1998): 107-132; Katherine Verdery, *What Was Socialism, and What Comes Next?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

[4] Verdery, pp. 61-82.

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[5] This trend of "no more *Sonderweg* for Soviet Union" (Laura Engelstein's words) is best exemplified by Stephen Kotkin's works. See Stephen Kotkin, "Modern Times: The Soviet Union and the Interwar Conjuncture," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* vol. 2, no. 1 (2001): 111-164; Laura Engelstein, "Culture, Culture Everywhere: Interpretations of Modern Russia, across the 1991 Divide," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* vol. 2, no. 2 (2000): 363-393.

[6] David Hoffmann, "Mothers in the Motherland: Stalinist Pronatalism in Its Pan-European Context," *Journal of Social History* vol. 34, no. 1 (2000): 35-54.

By locating the Soviet welfare program within maternalist discourse, it becomes possible to offer a new approach to the well-studied topic of maternalism: the comparison between "strong state" and "weak state." "Strong states," defined as those with well-developed bureaucracies and traditions of governmental intervention, tend to yield the politically least effective women's movements but offer comprehensive welfare programs for women and children. Western European countries, notably Germany and France, belong to this pattern. Examples of a "weak state," on the other hand, are the United States, and, to a lesser degree, Great Britain, which have had the most politically powerful women's reform movements but have offered the least extensive and generous maternal and child benefits.[7] The dichotomy of the "strong" and "weak" states can be rephrased as the differences between "maternal welfare provision in the paternalistic regimes" and the "maternalist regimes"; however, a line cannot be easily drawn between maternalism and paternalism.[8] Is it possible to describe the paternalist policies in the Soviet Union, one of the strongest states in the world, as "maternalist"?

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[7] Seth Koven and Sonya Michel, "Womanly Duties: Maternalist Politics and The Origins of Welfare States in France, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States, 1880-1920," *American Historical Review* Vol. 95 (1990): 1077-1108.

[8] Jane Lewis, "Women's Agency, Maternalism and Welfare," *Gender and History* vol. 6, no. 1 (April 1994): 117-123.

Taking advantage of the comparative nature of the study of maternalism and the current developments in Soviet social history, this chapter explores the possibilities and limits of "maternalism" as a paradigm for Soviet women's history. It will begin by examining the transformation of Soviet family codes from its revolutionary 1918 Code to the more conservative 1944 Code. This discussion will be pushed a step further by incorporating a non-Russian perspective through which to explore the Soviet maternalist discourse. This chapter will look at how the Soviet maternal policies and pronatalist drive were incorporated into the Soviet modernization of women in Western Ukraine.

Soviet Family Policies

The evolution of the Soviet policy towards mothers and children was closely linked with the historical development of Soviet women. The first Soviet Family Code in 1918 constituted the era's most progressive legislation for women and families.[9] Imbued with utopian revolutionary visions that assumed that the family would eventually wither away and that marriage would be based purely on love, the Code abolished women's inferior legal status, established marriage as a union between equals, and permitted divorce at the request of either spouse. As well, centuries of male privilege in property law were swept away. The Code abolished illegitimacy and entitled all children to be equal regardless of whether they were born within or outside of a registered civil marriage. Furthermore, the 1918 Family Code outlawed adoption and foster care, optimistically believing that the state's public institutions could take better care of children than foster families could, and also assuming that foster children would only increase children's unpaid labour in peasant households.[10] (Russia, at the time, was still a predominantly agricultural society.) The 1918 Family Code was the first step in transferring childcare from the family to the state. Abortion was legalized in 1920, for the first time in world history. The women's department of the Communist Party, zhenotdel, was instrumental in the attempt to materialize the utopian Bolshevik aspirations into reality.

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[9] Wendy Goldman, "Women, the Family, and the New Revolutionary Order in the Soviet Union," in Sonia Kruks, Rayna Rapp, and Marilyn B. Young, eds., *Promissory Notes: Women in the Transition to Socialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1989): 59-81.

Reality, however, quickly belied the promise of the Bolshevik utopia. Overwhelmed by the First World War, the Bolshevik Revolution, and Civil War, the country was left with hundreds of thousands of homeless children and orphans, whom the new public institutions were unable to accommodate. Pressed by the mounting numbers of homeless children, overcrowded children's institutions, and youth crime, the Soviet authorities reinstituted adoption in 1926, a first sign of retreat from the communist dream. Peasant households who took in homeless children and provided them with education and agricultural training would receive extra land free from taxes. The state also expanded its network of foster homes to industrial workers by offering tax breaks, financial supports, and rent discounts. A variety of preventative methods and regulations that would guarantee children's wellbeing, however, did not function satisfactorily and many foster children were left to exploitation and abuse at the hands of foster parents.

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[10] Laurie Bernstein, "The Evolution of Soviet Adoption Law," *Journal of Family History*, vol. 22, no. 2, (April 1997): 204-227; idem, "Fostering the Next Generation of Socialist: Patronirovanie in the Fledgling Soviet State," *Journal of Family History*, vol. 26, no. 1 (January 2001): 66-90.

From the late 1920s onwards, as Stalin launched two massive initiatives to industrialize the Soviet Union, the collectivization of agriculture and the First Five Year Plan (1928-1932), Soviet policies towards mothers also began to change. As women started to enter the workforce, Stalin's government began to take a new attitude towards women and their role in the family. The "New Soviet Woman" was an equal to men in the workplace and society, but she also had to devote herself to her family by caring for her children and providing moral support and a comfortable home for her husband. The New Soviet Women provided valuable economic and social services to the society, in which, despite the utopian promise of communalization of household work and institutionalization of childcare, the consumer goods and social services remained perpetually insufficient. The 1936 Family Code reflected this shift in that it illegalized abortion, made divorce much more difficult to obtain, and initiated a pronatalist drive by providing aid to women with many children. A mother with six children or more was given an annual allowance of 2,000 rubles for five years for each subsequent child.

The pronatalist drive initiated by the 1936 Family Code evolved significantly during the Second World War. The German attack and occupation of the Soviet territories resulted in unprecedented human loss, family separation, and numbers of homeless children and orphans, causing demographic catastrophe. The statistics suggest that about 20 million men and 7 million women died, leaving a massively imbalanced postwar male-to-female ratio. It is estimated that at the end of 1945, the number of women in the age group 20-29 was about 50 percent larger than the number of men in the same age group.[11] This imbalance in the sex ratio continued to influence Soviet society for a long time. For example, according to the 1959 census, only two-thirds of women in the 20-to-49 age group were married, many of whom would have reached marriageable age, married, and begun bearing children during and immediately after the war.[12] A demographic hypothesis further suggests that had there been no war, a total of 28 million children would have been born, whereas actual births were approximately 16.5 million during the period of 1941-1945, meaning that approximately 11.5 million children were not born as a result of the war. Therefore, the total hypothetical demographic war loss at the end of 1945 is 35-36 million (the war loss of 27-28 million plus the hypothetical number of 11.5 million unborn children). The number of 35-36 million would be higher if it included, as it did in Western Ukraine, non-conscripted fighters, i.e., partisans, resistance fighters, and the underground in the territories occupied by the Germans.[13] Although poor nutrition and inadequate health facilities during the war caused high infant mortality and miscarriages, thus reducing overall women's fertility, the relative absence of men was the primary reason for the lower birth rate.[14] Thus, the 1944 Family Code was a direct reflection of the wartime reality of huge human losses and social dislocations.[15]

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[11] Michael Ellman and S. Maksudov, "Soviet Death in the Great Patriotic War: A Note," *Europe-Asia Studies* 46. 4 (1994): 671-680.

[12] Barbara A. Anderson and Brian D. Silver, "Demographic Consequences of World War II on the Non-Russian Nationalities of the USSR," in Susan Linz, ed., *The Impact of World War II on the Soviet Union* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Allanheld, 1985): 207-242.

[13] Ellman and Maksudov, *ibid.*

The number of children necessary to qualify for state support payments was lowered from six in the 1936 Family Code to four, and the money was paid in a monthly, not an annual, instalment. A one-time payment was made to a mother after the birth of her third and each subsequent child. Maternity leave was extended from 63 days under the 1936 Family Code to 77 days, including 35 days before the birth and 42 days after the birth. In the case of a difficult birth or the birth of more than two children, after-birth leave was increased to 56 days. Pregnant and nursing mothers were not to be put on overtime or night work. Supplementary rations for mothers were increased. A pro-family aspect was demonstrated in provisions that protected marriage as an institution. For the first time since the Russian Revolution, an unregistered marriage was no longer legally valid, thus creating a clear distinction in birth certificates between legitimate and illegitimate children. Divorce was made an even more difficult and complicated procedure that required high fees, and a tax was imposed on bachelors over the age of 25. In addition, the 1944 Family Code created new honorary titles for mothers who had given birth to five or more children. A mother who gave birth to five children was not only provided with monetary benefits, but also awarded the Motherhood Medal Class II. Six children earned a Motherhood Medal Class I. Mothers of seven, eight, and nine children were honoured with the

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[14] John Barber and Mark Harrison, *The Soviet Home Front, 1941-1945: A Social and Economic History of the USSR in World War II* (London: Longman, 1991), pp. 92-93.

[15] For its English translation, see Rudolf Schlesinger, ed., *Changing Attitudes in Soviet Russia: The Family in the USSR* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Limited, 1949), pp. 367-377.

Order of Motherhood Glory, Class III, II, and I, respectively. The highest honour, the Order of "Mother Heroine," went to the mother of ten or more children. The introduction of military-style medals for mothers reinforced the notion that giving birth and rearing children was as honourable as engaging in combat, as well as being exclusively a female function.

While the 1944 Family Code is often regarded as the culmination of conservative Stalinist gender policies, these pronatalist programs and emphasis on motherhood were not unique to the Soviet Union. A close look at the 1944 Family Code within a comparative context reveals that pronatalism and familialism are intimately connected, but that they are not always identical. The Soviet Code included both pro-natalist and pro-family provisions, but the former definitely took precedence over the latter. Even the awarding of military-style motherhood medals had many precedents elsewhere. In 1920, the French government introduced an award for mothers with five or more children, and in Franco's Spain, a "large family," defined as a family with four or more children, was provided with family allowances and benefits. A family with twelve children was given an honorary title.[16] In Nazi Germany, the "Cross of Honour of the German Mother," a cross bearing the inscription "the child ennobles the mother," was awarded in bronze, silver, and gold to the mother with four, six, and eight children respectively.[17] Well after the Second

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[16] Mary Nash, "Pronatalism and Motherhood in Franco's Spain," in Gisela Bock and Pat Thane, eds., *Maternity and Gender Policies: Women and the Rise of the European Welfare States, 1880s - 1950s* (London: Routledge, 1991): 160-177.

[17] Lisa Pine, *Nazi Family Policy 1933-1945* (New York: Berg, 1997), p. 96.

World War, in the late 1960s, Ceausescu's Romania closely followed in the Soviets' footsteps. Women who delivered and reared ten or more children were awarded the title of "Heroine Mother." Mothers of nine, eight, and seven were awarded the "Order of Maternal Glory," Class I, II, and III, respectively, and mothers of six and five were honoured with the "Medal of Maternity," Class I and II, respectively.[18]

Nevertheless, Soviet pronatalism had its own distinctive characteristics. Although in the Soviet Union the child allowance was paid to mothers regardless of whether they were single or married, in Italy and Germany a family allowance was paid to fathers as a supplement to the breadwinner's wage, thus reinforcing male authority within the family. In Nazi Germany, single mothers received a child allowance only if the father of the child was known to the authorities. Also in Nazi Germany and, to a lesser degree, Romania, the pronatalist programs accompanied drives for "racial purity." The Nazis pursued a selective anti-natalist policy by imposing sterilisation and abortion on Jewish and Gypsy women.[19] Similarly, in Ceausescu's Romania, the government had an unstated preference to increase the birth rate of only Romanians and not "hyphenated" Romanians such as Hungarians and Gypsies. The Romanian authorities were particularly anxious to control the higher birthrates of the Gypsy population, who were believed not to practice abortion and to "multiply like rabbits."[20]

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[18] Gail Kligman, "The Politics of Reproduction in Ceausescu's Romania: A Case Study in Political Culture," *East European Politics and Societies*, vol. 6, no. 3 (Fall 1992): 364-418.

[19] Gisela Bock, "Antinatalism, Maternity and Paternity in National Socialist Racism," in *Maternity and Gender Policies*, pp. 233-255.

[20] Kligman, p. 385.

Although the Soviet state certainly discouraged unregistered marriages, it did not intend to discourage women from having children outside of wedlock. Single mothers, unmarried or widowed, were given support from the birth of the first child until the child turned twelve. Single mothers with more than three children were also entitled to state support as "Mothers with Many Children." In exchange for being deprived of the right of suing a biological father for child support, a policy which allowed men to have children while avoiding material responsibility, unmarried mothers were given the right to place their children in state childcare institutions at the expense of the state. This provision indicated the desperate need to increase population even at the expense of conventional morality.

As well, the Soviet legislation contained a lenient definition of what constituted a "child" for "Mothers with Many Children." To qualify for any mother's awards, a woman was able to count adopted children, stepchildren, or children from different fathers, all of whom did not qualify in the previous 1936 Family Code.[21] This extended eligibility reflected the new recognition of adoption as the selfless act of patriotic Soviet citizens. By contrast, in Romania, children acquired through a second marriage and adoption did not qualify women for awards.[22]

Contradictory provisions towards unmarried mothers directly reflected wartime reality. As is typical in an age of total warfare and consequent social dislocation, more informal and temporary relationships increased in number. The

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[21] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 23 August 1944, p. 2; Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism, Ordinary Life in Extra Ordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 156.

[22] Kligman, ibid.

1944 Family Code was a reaction to the demographic catastrophes caused by the war and was a belated recognition of the wartime reality on the home front. The Soviet authorities used propaganda, incentives, and force in order to have women bear as many children as possible, whether legitimate or illegitimate, and whether a father was present or not. Postwar normality and family reunions did not reappear immediately after May 1945. A substantial portion of married women became war widows, thus becoming heads of single-parent households. Even if fathers returned home alive, they often had been traumatized and mutilated physically and psychologically by wartime experiences, and were unable to support their families. Immediate postwar literature depicted physically wounded and traumatized men and assigned women the role of "soul healers."[23] Under such circumstances, asking for the husband's help in parenting and in housekeeping was often unrealistic and impractical. If the child allowance had been paid to fathers, as in many other Western European countries, numerous single mothers would have been excluded.

The most important aspect of the Soviet form of maternalism is that for all the emphasis on motherhood and pronatalism, the Soviet state never precluded women's work outside the home, even at the peak of the pronatalist campaign during the Second World War. Soviet programs involving mothers and children, such as the building of public institutions for children, the granting of generous maternity leaves, and the providing of communal facilities for housework, were geared towards achieving greater control over labour and maximizing production. When Soviet maternal policies shifted in the late 1920s, the First Five Year Plan was officially launched, and women started to enter the waged labour force in every sector of the economy to an unprecedented degree. In fact, the actual increase of women workers to 1,268,000 was well off the initial figure of 793,000 that Soviet officials estimated.[24] Faced with a labour shortage during the rapid industrialization, and perpetual shortages of consumer goods and deficient public institutions, the officials promoted women's traditional role as housekeeper and nurturer rather than attempting the more difficult task of creating a true welfare state that would assume comprehensive housework responsibilities for all Soviet citizens.[25] Although predicated upon women's traditional nurturing and caregiving role, the Soviet social policies towards mothers and children were, nevertheless, also premised on women's incorporation into wage labour. On the other hand, the obshchestvennitsa movement, or wives' movement, in which housewives were organized through their husbands' workplace and were engaged in social activities, was a rare example in the Soviet maternalist discourse of a phenomenon that had a Western counterpart. Scholars have argued that the discourse upon which the obshchestvennitsa was based closely resembled the maternalist discourse in Western countries -- a woman performed a service to the state by caring for her husband and children, and her official identity was based on her "dependency" on a husband who earned a family wage. A "wife-activist" was defined as a married woman, and her identity revolved around her role as her husband's helpmate at home without remuneration. Dubbed the "housewife to the nation," the wife-activist was encouraged to realize that her responsibility to husband and children took precedence over her civic obligations.[26]

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[23] Anna Krylova, "Healers of Wounded Souls: The Crisis of Private Life in Soviet Literature, 1944-1946," *Journal of Modern History* 73. 2 (2000): 307-332.

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[24] Wendy Z. Goldman, *Women at the Gates: Gender and Industry in Stalin's Russia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 88.

[25] Choi Chatterjee, "Ideology, Gender, and Propaganda in the Soviet Union: A Historical Survey," *Left History*, vol. 6, no. 2 (1999): 11-26.

The unique experiment of Soviet maternalism also explains Soviet historians' discomfort in approaching the Soviet maternalist discourse. Some feminist historians in the West reject the ideas of motherhood and maternalism as incompatible with female emancipation, instead emphasizing the state's instrumentality in perpetuating traditional patriarchy and the conservative family, thus contributing towards minimizing the importance of women's roles in the welfare state. [27] Soviet historians also appear uncomfortable with applying the maternalist discourse to Soviet women's experiences. Assessment of Soviet maternal policies as empowerment or entitlement is regarded as incompatible with female emancipation because as a result of these policies, women indeed became "double-burdened" by their duties as mothers and workers in the male-dominated socialist society. Nonetheless, the Soviet state in fact reorganised motherhood and gender roles. When the Soviet Family Codes were revised to emphasise motherhood and pronatalism, the Soviet state also provided more legislation to ensure good working conditions for working mothers, to provide more public eating facilities, and to increase the number of public institutions for children's upbringing. Moreover, relatively early retirement served to make unpaid household labour largely the responsibility of pensioners, who stood in food lines, cared for grandchildren, and prepared meals for their working family members. Though they were still highly feminised because of the sex imbalance in the elder age groups, household tasks were, to a certain degree, actually "geriatrised."[28]

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[26] Neary, p. 403.

[27] Koven and Michel, "Womanly Duties," p. 1083.

Furthermore, despite all the emphasis on motherhood and the pronatalist drive, the perception and impact of this campaign varied throughout the vast Soviet Union.[29] While it is true that Soviet maternal policies represented a shift from an attempt to create a revolutionary utopia to a desire to implement a neoconservative status quo, this scheme does not apply to the new Soviet territories that had become Soviet only recently and that had not experienced the Bolshevik "utopia" during the early 1920s. For women in Western Ukraine, who had been isolated from Soviet influences throughout the interwar period, the 1944 Family Code was their first formal encounter with the Soviet policies regarding mothers and children.

The Belated Implementation of Soviet Motherhood

When the revised Family Code was featured in *Pravda* in early July 1944, Western Ukraine was still under German occupation, and the Soviet Army was marching westward to repel the Germans. In late July, the Soviet Army entered L'viv. After resuming printing, *Vil'na Ukraine*, the communist party organ in L'viv oblast soon published the new Family Code in late August.[30] After the initial publication, however, the newspaper did not contain much coverage of how the new Family Code was carried out throughout the rest of 1944 and early 1945. Instead, the newspaper was filled with the euphoric articles in which people in L'viv, young mothers and senior citizens, rejoiced at the end of the war and German occupation, and were happily engaged in the city's reconstruction.[31] The systematic campaign for "Mothers with Many Children" did not start until the spring of 1945, when the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine issued a decree to create zhinviddily, women's departments in the party committees of eight western Ukrainian oblasts. As I have discussed in Chapter Two, the activities of the women's departments and women's councils were not confined to promoting the Soviet pronatalist drive. Instead, their duties also included political activities and participation in the struggle against the Ukrainian nationalist forces, but the 1944 Family Code certainly was one of the guiding principles for the women's activities. In fact, the belated implementation of the Soviet modernization of motherhood in Western Ukraine was based upon the 1944 Family Code.

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[28] Verdery, p. 65.

[29] For a study on motherhood and pronatalism in a non-Russian Soviet Islamic republic, see Paula A. Michaels, "Motherhood, Patriotism, and Ethnicity: Soviet Kazakhstan and the 1936 Abortion Ban," *Feminist Studies*, vol. 27, no. 2 (Summer 2001): 307-333.

The Department for the Protection of Motherhood and Infancy (OMM) coordinated the implementation of the 1944 Code throughout the Soviet Union, but in Western Ukraine, women's departments functioned as intermediaries between the OMM and the local population. The Soviet authorities were well aware of the importance of both improvements of medical facilities essential in order to encourage women to have more children, as well as extensive propaganda to inform the local female population about their new rights. As a new Soviet territory, Western Ukraine had poorer medical facilities than those in the rest of the Soviet Union. Many parts of Western Ukraine lacked enough gynaecologists and other medical personnel to care for the population. Accordingly, thousands of gynaecologists, midwives, and nurses were sent to Western Ukraine. As well, the OMM held a conference of gynaecologists and medical workers to discuss the birth and child mortality rates,[32] and the Soviet state increased the building of local medical schools. During the 1945-46 academic year, Western Ukraine had twelve medical schools, but just one year later had twenty-one.[33] The new Soviet medical agencies had to struggle with not only inefficient medical facilities but also cultural tradition. Having lived in a pre-industrial society until the Second World War, many Ukrainian women were still not accustomed to going to see a doctor. The Soviet medical staff, with the help of the women's departments, made extensive efforts to educate women and encourage them to go to doctors and give birth in hospitals. The statistics for childbirth in the L'viv oblast show different patterns of childbirth in the cities and in the countryside (see Table 4-1). While most births (over 90%) in the cities were already supported by the Soviet medical services, the countryside lagged behind. An especially striking contrast, though not utterly surprising, was that while medical support for Soviet childbirth gradually increased both in the cities and in the countryside, in the cities childbirth in the hospitals steadily increased while home birth decreased, whereas in the countryside, childbirth at home dramatically increased while birth in the hospitals only slowly increased. Officials attributed the low support for childbirth by the Soviet medical agencies in the countryside to the lack of a transportation system, poor sanitary facilities in hospitals, and misinformation about the Soviet medical system. Above all, they placed particular blame on the ignorance of local Ukrainian women, who "lacked a cultural attitude, and kept old customs, and went to see illiterate *babky* (lay midwives)."[34]

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[30] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 22 August 1944, p. 2.

[31] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 23 August 1944, p. 3.

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[32] TsDAVO, f. 342, op. 14, spr. 494, ark. 43.

[33] TsDAVO, f. 342, op. 14, spr. 494, ark. 2-6.

Table 4-1. Percentage of childbirths supported by the Soviet medical facilities in the L'viv oblast, 1946-1948

		Year	1946	1947	1948
Cities	A	Percentage of total childbirths supported by the Soviet facilities	91.3%	90.6%	94%
	B	Percentage of births occurring in hospitals	84.3%	85.3%	90.7%
	C	Percentage of births occurring in homes	7.0%	5.3%	3.3%
Countryside	D	Percentage of total childbirths supported by the Soviet facilities	32.3%	55.2%	74.9%

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[34] TsDAVO, f. 342, op. 14, spr. 407, ark. 1-9.

	E	Percentages of births occurring in hospitals	3.5%	5.4%	6.8%
	F	Percentage of births occurring in homes	28.8%	49.8%	68.2%

Source: TsDAVO, f. 342, op. 14, spr. 4071, ark. 9; spr. 4122, ark. 6a.

The Soviet propaganda to promote the campaign included journals, newspapers, radio, talks, lectures, and seminars. *Radians'ka zhinka* published the excerpt from the Family Code in order to inform the female population who was eligible for the awards as well as periodically featuring happy stories about mothers.[35] The women's departments cooperated with the OMM to promote the Soviet view of motherhood among the female population. Seminars on "mothers and babies," "problems with child care," "women's hygiene," and "children's infectious disease" were held which emphasised the same themes found in the political seminars on "what has the Soviet Union given women?" and "the nature of Ukrainian nationalists."[36] Among the many female-only meetings, the International Women's Day festivities were one of the most important occasions during which women became the center of attention. The All-Union Communist Party Central Committee's appeals, issued annually on Women's Day, reported the number of women awarded the highest honour of "Mother Heroine" in the USSR: 5,850 in 1946, 25,000 in 1948, and 30,750 in 1950; the number of other medals and orders awarded was more than 750,000 in 1946,

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[35] *Radians'ka zhinka*, no. 5 (1946), p. 23.

[36] TsDAVO, f. 342, op. 14, spr. 494, ark. 2.

2,200,000 in 1948, and 2,770,000 in 1950.[37] The Women's Day festival meeting was an extremely important occasion in terms of Soviet propaganda; eligible mothers received a medal in public. During the month of March, especially during the weeks preceding Women's Day, issues relating to women took on urgency in the press, in women activists' reports, among Party circles, women's departments, various ministries, and schools. Propaganda on women's issues was disseminated on a wide scale through meetings, published statistics, articles and reports on the status of women in society, theatrical shows, works of fiction, poster art, slogans, and wall newspapers.[38] In fact, local administrations sometimes hurriedly prepared the list and all the documentation for awards just in time for the eighth of March so that mothers would receive their awards at the celebration. Local newspapers also published the number of mothers who were awarded and the amount of money paid to them on an almost daily basis.

The women activists helped with mothers' applications for awards and reported to the authorities how many women applied, were accepted, and received awards and medals. The pronatalist drive went hand in hand with an anti-abortion campaign. The Greek Catholic Church strongly condemned abortion and contraception, claiming that these practices threatened the future of humanity and contravened natural law. The Church's argument that limiting the size of families would have a detrimental effect on the future of Ukrainian society had a special resonance among patriotic Ukrainians.[39] The interwar women's movement also strongly condemned abortion for ethical reasons, but abortions were indeed performed in Western Ukraine.[40] Since the arrival of the regime in the region, the Soviet authorities periodically publicised the news of the prosecutions of those who had received or performed illegal abortions. Though women who resorted to abortion were not exempted from persecution, the main blame was usually placed on doctors and unqualified women who performed the procedure, and husbands or boyfriends who forced women into it.[41]

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[37] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 8 March 1946, 8 March 1948, and 8 March 1950.

[38] As for the International Women's Day in the Soviet Union, see Choi Chatterjee, *Celebrating Women: Gender, Festival Culture, and Bolshevik Ideology* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2002).

The process of the Sovietization of Western Ukraine, as has been well documented in other studies, caused tremendous difficulties for and resistance against the Soviet regime. The civil war between the Ukrainian nationalist forces and the Soviet army continued well into the 1950s. Because the authorities had to heavily recruit Russians and Eastern Ukrainians to fill administrative positions in Western Ukraine, the Soviet administration was perceived as an "alien" regime in the region, and anti-Soviet sentiment among the population increased. The situation was the same for the mobilization of women. The majority of the women's department's activists were recruited from outside of Western Ukraine, mostly from Eastern Ukraine and Russia. Soviet programs such as the collectivization of agriculture, industrialization, and political education generated tremendous difficulties and resistance. Women activists who joined the Soviet collective farms were often targeted by the Ukrainian partisan forces as traitors of Ukraine, even when these activists had been recruited from the local population.

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[39] Andrii Krawchuk, *Christian Social Ethics in Ukraine: The Legacy of Andrei Sheptytsky* (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1997), pp. 147-150.

[40] Bohachevsky-Chomiak, *Feminist despite Themselves*, p. 192.

[41] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 25 January 1941, p. 6; 1 February 1941, p. 6.

The awards for mothers, however, were part of a different kind of Soviet campaign: they were entitlements. Caring for children did not require professional training or political education. Mothers who were awarded medals and cash benefits had given birth well before 1944, while still living under the Polish regime or German occupation. Thus, the awards for mothers were the least "Soviet-coloured" program targeting women in Western Ukraine. Furthermore, and most importantly, mothers awarded for having many children were most probably local Ukrainian women, not newcomers from Eastern Ukraine or Russia, most of whom came to Western Ukraine to work and did not have large families. The available statistics do not indicate the ethnic composition of the recipients of benefits, because the campaign for "Mothers with Many Children" was one of the rare Soviet programs in Western Ukraine in which the women's department did not have to report to the authorities whether or not the awarded mother was actually a "local" Ukrainian woman. In all other Soviet programs, the officials were always concerned with how many local people had been recruited to collective farms, the communist party, or industries.

Representations and Realities of the "Mothers with Many Children"

Although Soviet policies towards mothers and children were based on the traditional nurturing and caregiving roles of women, the Soviet regime in Western Ukraine did not simply resort to a traditional notion of women as mother or follow in the footsteps of the interwar women's movement's task of emphasising motherhood. When the Soviet state provided support for mothers and children, their goal was to transform women in light of a uniquely Soviet style womenhood that combined female wage labour and domestic obligations. In addition, given the Soviet presence's unpopularity in the region in this period of social upheaval and scarcity of consumer goods, the Soviet aid for mothers and children offered an appealing example of how generously the Soviet state was taking care of them and securing the future of the entire society.

L'viv's first postwar International Women's Day was celebrated on 8 March 1945 and it featured liberation of L'viv from German occupation. At the celebration meetings, many women received their awards for "Mothers with Many Children," including one 33-year-old mother who had recently given a birth to her eighth child; this mother was awarded the order of Motherhood Glory Class II. She received more than 4,000 rubles, which she used to buy shoes, clothes, and food for her children. She was a housewife, and her husband worked at a locksmith factory, thus contributing to the Soviet Union's war effort.[42] Having lived under a foreign regime and war occupation, and having previously had no rights or entitlements, Western Ukrainian women made particularly ideal and gracious recipients of the generous Soviet policies for mothers. Thus, at the celebrations, mothers thanked Stalin and the Soviet Union for liberating Western Ukraine from German occupiers: "only under the

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[42] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 16 March 1945, p. 3.

Soviet regime do mothers with many children have the honorary titles of Mother Heroine and receive many state benefits for bringing up children."[43]

The statistics on the children of "Mothers with Many Children" demonstrate the dichotomous nature of mothers' status and also reflect the chaotic reality of the postwar Soviet society (see Table 4-2). In 1946, in L'viv oblast, 6,704 children were born into families that already had at least three children (i.e., they were children of "Mothers with Many Children"). Of those children, the mothers of 1,798 of them were classified as "housewives," and therefore, were not working outside the home. In contrast, the fact that the mothers of only 10 children were classified as "collective farm workers" does not necessarily indicate that peasant women had fewer children. These statistics were compiled in 1946 when the collectivization drive in Western Ukraine was still in its early stages, therefore many non-collectivized peasant women would be categorized as "others and unknown." The same applied to the large number of fathers' occupation's which were classified as "others and unknown." However, this category, in addition to non-collectivized peasant, included many fathers who had died at the front, did not have a job, or simply were not known. This indicates that as a result of the war many mothers became single parents and, thus, the breadwinners in their families.

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[43] DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 139, ark. 143.

Table 4-2. Number of children born in families of "Mothers with Many Children" and the occupations of their mothers and fathers in L'viv oblast, 1946.

			Father's occupation		
			Workers and white collar employees	Collective Farm Workers	Others and Unknown
Total Number of Children		6,704	2,005	7	4,692
Mother's Occupation	Workers and white-collar employees	232	151	0	81
	Collective Farm workers	10	1	6	3
	Housewives	1,798	1,370	1	427
	Others and unknown	4,664	483	0	4,181

Source: DALO, f. R-283, op. 13, spr. 7, ark. 75, 76, 79.

While the statistics show that the mothers of 1,789 children were housewives, the idyllic image of the obshchestvennitsa in the 1930s was far less relevant in postwar Western Ukraine than it was elsewhere in the Soviet Union. Rather, the story of Mariia Buiukla, a Mother Heroine with eleven children, exemplified Soviet motherhood in Western Ukraine. Three of her sons had fought at the front, and one had not come back. Her youngest son was at the military college. Her three daughters were either working as professionals or studying for professional jobs.[44] She said that in the Soviet Union, women had the chance to pursue a career. Although she was a mother with eleven children, she was not a housewife, but worked at the local soviet, and she hoped her daughters would become professionals. The ideal Soviet woman was not just a "mother with many children," but a "working mother with many children."

Soon after the implementation of the 1944 Family Code, the Ukrainian Politburo issued a decree in November 1944 to enlarge the network of child care institutions. When the Fourth Five Year Plan started in 1946 and women began to enter the workforce, the building of day care centres took on an added urgency, as discussed in Chapter Three. The overall qualities of the facilities, however, remained extremely unsatisfactory throughout the period.

Contrary to the official representation of new Soviet mothers in Western Ukraine, the reports by the women's departments reveal that many difficulties and problems occurred, including delays in payment, miscalculations, arrears, and even overpayments.[45] A local Soviet official once falsified documents for his wife so that she would get extra money.[46] Extra rations for mothers and child care institutions often disappeared during their delivery.[47] The extended eligibility increased the complexity of the paperwork required and created long waiting periods for the actual awards or state support. Application for awards had to be made at the registry office where the applicant (mother) lived. If she had a child who lived separately or who served at the front, she had to get a birth certificate or other relevant documents from another town or military authorities, a process which took time. Once the application was made, the registry office was to decide within two weeks whether the applicant was eligible for rewards, and then turn the file over to the financial office. However, the process hardly ever went smoothly. In one extreme case, a local office did not process a file of one "Mother Heroine" for ten months after it had been first sent to the office at the end of 1945.[48] Although thousands of mothers applied and were accepted as eligible, not all mothers received medals or orders as prescribed in the Family Code.

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[44] *Buduemo nove zyttia: zbirnyk* (Ukrains'ka vydavnytstvo: Kyiv, 1947), pp. 22-24.

The Soviet officials were concerned with the number of actual recipients of medals and orders not only because of what it revealed about the inefficiency of the Soviet administration, but also because medals and orders symbolized Soviet women's heroic dedication to the country. The percentage of mothers who actually received a medal ranged from 50% to nearly 100% depending on each oblast.[49] The percentage of mothers who received medals was especially low in Western Ukraine (see Table 4-3). In 1947, the average percentage of mothers who received awards was only 55.9%. In 1948, it rose to 69.9%, which was still lower than the average of the entire Ukrainian republic (78.0%). Furthermore, in L'viv oblast alone, in 1946, 4,195 mothers were eligible for awards as "Mothers with Many Children," but only 626 of them actually received the awards. In total, only 1,356 mothers received awards after the campaign started, an indication of how inefficient the registry office was.[50]

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[45] DALO, f. P-3, op. 2, spr. 523, ark. 192.

[46] TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 23, spr. 4581, ark. 153.

[47] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 24 October 1945, p. 2.

[48] DALO, f. P-3, op. 2, spr. 290, ark. 101.

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[49] TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 74, spr. 4, ark. 97, 100, 109, 115, 117; op. 75, spr. 207, ark. 50, 51, 90, 92.

Table 4-3. Number of "Mothers with Many Children" and actual recipients of medals and orders in Western Ukraine within the Ukrainian Soviet Republic, 1947-1948

	Western Ukraine, 1947	Western Ukraine, 1948	The Ukrainian Soviet Republic, 1948
Mother Heroine (10 or more children)	209	520	2,525
Motherhood Glory I. (9 children)	554	1,070	NA
Motherhood Glory II. (8 children)	1,586	2,803	
Motherhood Glory III. (7 children)	3,809	6,881	
Motherhood Medal I. (6 children)	4,087	9,098	NA
Motherhood Medal II (5 children)	6,047	14,793	
Total Women Eligible for Medals and Orders	16,083	34,645	251,947
Recipients of Medals and Orders	8,999	24,246	196,572
Percentage of Recipients among Eligible Women	55.9%	69.9%	78%

Source: TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 74, spr. 4, ark. 91, 97.

Despite the Soviet officials' intentions, women took an exploitive approach to Soviet pronatalism. Once mothers were granted official recognition as "Mothers with Many Children," they tried to get as many benefits as possible in order to survive in the difficult postwar conditions. The reports of women's departments show how lively mothers' interests were in material benefits. For example, Mariia Pavlivna

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[50] DALO, f. P-3, o. 2, spr. 288, ark. 123.

Pychekha was a "Mother Heroine" who had emigrated from Poland after the war with her ten children and invalid husband and wrote a letter to Stalin to complain about her material situation. The letter was forwarded to the women's department, which investigated her situation. The investigation revealed that Pychekha already had enough material aid: a one-time cash benefit of 6,000 rubles and a monthly allowance of 300 rubles, a house with cattle, coupons for children's shoes, winter coats, sweaters, fabrics, 1,000 kilograms of potatoes, 300 kilograms of cabbage, 200 kilograms of beets, and the list went on. Additionally, the family had been asked to join a collective farm, which would offer them another house.[51] Another mother of six children whose son and husband both were killed in the war also sent a letter to Stalin. This mother received a one-time cash benefit of 300 rubles, coupons for 700 kilograms of sugar, bread, an apartment suite, and 2,800 rubles for repairs. Her three children were placed in kindergarten, but she took them back within two weeks. She herself was offered a job as director of a day care centre for a monthly income of 450 rubles. In addition, she received her late husband's pension of 560 rubles.[52]

Such letters making excessive requests indicate Ukrainian women's exploitive approach to Soviet pronatalism, but on the other hand, there were indeed miserable cases in need of immediate help. Hanna Ivanivna's case was extreme in that she and her children all had venereal disease and lived in poverty despite her medal for "Motherhood Glory." Her husband had not returned from the war front; her application to join the collective farm was rejected because of her illness; and her children could not go to school. The case was sent to the first secretary of the L'viv party committee and immediate action was taken. The family was to be provided with necessary medical care, help with their living conditions, school for the children, and admittance into a kolkhoz.[53] Even when there was a husband who had survived the war, he often could not support a family. Another case of a mother with many children showed that her husband had a job, but was often drunk and did not work enough to support his family.[54] In the immediate postwar years, life was too difficult for most women to stay home as housewives. Despite the state's commitment to increasing the birth rate, the war loss was too huge to be recovered in the immediate postwar years. In fact, Ukraine's war loss was so extreme, because of its experience during the occupation and civil war, that Ukraine did not return to its pre-war population level until 1960.[55] Despite the generous aid for mothers and children, and the propaganda and positive representation of "Mothers with Many Children," the Stalinist pronatalist drive definitely did not achieve its intended aims of population increase.

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[51] DALO, f. P-3, op. 2, spr. 287, ark. 68-69.

[52] DALO, f. P-3, o. 2, spr. 287, ark. 49-50.

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[53] DALO, f. P-3, op. 2, spr. 287, ark. 45.

[54] DALO, f. P-3, op. 2, spr. 287, ark. 42.

[55] Krawchenko, p. 171.

It has been argued that the Soviet modernization of motherhood after 1917 continued along the lines already under way in Imperial Russia.[56] It is perhaps not surprising that a maternalist discourse evolving out of the traditional notion of women as natural nurturers contained and transcended changes of political regime. This was undoubtedly the case in Western Ukraine. The Soviet transformation of motherhood there held many traits in common with those not only in other countries but also in Western Ukraine itself before the arrival of the Soviet regime. Prior to the war, Western Ukraine was predominantly agricultural, and women lived in a traditional patriarchal society, but, as the activities of *Soiuz ukrainok* showed, women had already begun to explore the modernization of motherhood by resorting to the limited resources available to them.

When compared with the strong maternalist movements in other Western countries, in which women actively voiced their opposition to governments and asserted their right to a mother's allowance, the examples of women's actions in Western Ukraine, both before and after the Second World War, appear limited. The pre-war Ukrainian women's movement did autonomously act on its members' initiatives and needs, but did not take maternalism a step further, as did its Western counterparts. As part of a stateless nation in Eastern Europe, Western Ukrainian women could not draw upon maternalist ideology to make demands of the government, nor did they aspire to challenge the patriarchal Ukrainian society.

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[56] Elizabeth Waters, "The Modernization of Russian Motherhood, 1917-1937," *Soviet Studies*, vol. 44, no. 1 (1992): 123-135. As for the maternalism in Imperial Russia, see Adele Lindenmeyer, "Public Life, Private Virtues: Women in Russian Charity, 1876-1914," *Signs*, vol. 18, no. 3 (Spring 1993): 562-591; idem "Maternalism and Child Welfare in Late Imperial Russia," *Journal of Women's History*, vol. 5, no. 2 (Fall 1993): 114-125.

The Soviet form of maternalism does not fit neatly into either a "strong state" or a "weak state." First, strong states with a strong bureaucratic apparatus generally had politically ineffective women's movements, yet provided the most comprehensive social programs for women. Yet, the women's departments and activities in the Soviet Union were explicitly "politically conscious." Certainly, their activities had to follow the Party line and any independent or non-party groups and movements were not formally permitted. Second, Soviet maternalism never lost its paternalist nature. Yet changes over time in the manner in which maternal aid was given to mothers in Western Ukraine reveal that even the strongest of paternalist states did not avoid problems. While theoretically the Soviet Union offered the most comprehensive programs for mothers and children, the reality was far from ideal. Soviet officials' handling of maternal aids and medals was often unsatisfactory and tainted by corruption. Consumer goods and facilities for mothers and children were perpetually scarce. Under the circumstances, "Mothers with Many Children" may have been, at least in official Soviet discourse, grateful recipients, but they did not always behave as "small children" toward their "fathers (Party)" as described by Katherine Verdery. Most of the mothers in Western Ukraine had become mothers well before the coming of the Soviet regime and quickly learned how to exercise their rights in defence of their lives as the postwar economic conditions did not allow the women to remain simply grateful "children" of the family. Alternatively, some local Ukrainian women took advantage of the new Soviet maternal policies when it was in

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their interest to do so, thus becoming important, if not overtly active, agents in the establishment of the Soviet regime.

Moreover, the Stalinist maternalism in Western Ukraine had a different meaning and impact than that of maternalism in the rest of the Soviet Union. The Soviet pronatalist drive and, especially the campaign for "Mothers with Many Children," served to justify otherwise extremely unpopular Soviet policies in the region. The essentialized gender role of "mother" was a rare feature of Sovietization that did not require special skills, training, or political education, and therefore would not have caused much resistance, bloodshed, or even hesitation. If the Soviet authorities had been able to provide enough consumer goods and adequate material aid, their maternal policies would likely have been the least unpopular Soviet policies in the region.

Ironically, for all the ideological differences and antagonism between Ukrainian nationalists and the Soviet regime, women living under both ideologies adopted a similar pattern of maternalism that combined the glorification of motherhood and work outside home. In contrast, women in Western countries were urged to return to the home after the war. The Soviet regime implemented its experiment in the modernization of motherhood through more drastic means and on a more extensive scale than its predecessors, but in essence, both programs treated women as mothers, and both sought to impose male tutelage and guidance under a patriarchal guise.

Chapter Five

Representation of Women: Magazines, Literature, and Memoirs.

Introduction

Recent scholarship argues that the victory in the Second World War served to legitimate the Soviet Union and to provide a new foundation for postwar society. The victorious war was portrayed as a unique achievement in the history of the Soviet Union, which is often referred to as the "Myth of the Second World War."[1] Scholars have examined the ways in which wartime experience was transformed into the dominant myth through the postwar Stalinist ideological campaign and propaganda by a variety of cultural media, in both Moscow and the non-Russian republics. This myth making process was indeed multi-dimensional and multi-ethnic. Particularly, the regions that became a part of the Soviet Union during the war had until recently experienced a separate process of historical development, which did not aptly fit into the ideological, or even chronological, framework of the "Great Patriotic War."

Since their arrival in the region in 1939, Soviet officials and Ukrainian intellectuals, writers, historians and musicians, were geared up to create and impose the official Soviet Ukrainian identity on Western Ukrainian society. This cultural mobilization ranged from new interpretations of the history of Western Ukraine and construction of museums and libraries, to the renaming of theatres, schools, and streets. In January 1940, for instance, Jan Kazimierz L'viv University was renamed in honour of Ivan Franko, one of the most famous and influential Western Ukrainian intellectuals in the nineteenth century.[2] In the postwar era, in the course of *zhdanovshchina,* an ideological campaign that rejected the liberal cultural climate and attacked the non-Russian patriotism that had been encouraged during the war in order to foster a fighting spirit, the Soviet cultural officials attempted to reestablish the glorification of Russian cultural and historic superiority. In such a cultural climate, the topic of the annexation of Western Ukraine posed one of the most important and challenging topics for Ukrainian intellectuals because of its long history of exposure to Western cultural influences and strong anti-Soviet sentiment. As the Soviet army marched into Western Ukraine in 1944, but still had to continue fighting with the nationalist partisans there, the Soviet Ukrainian historians were assigned to provide an official interpretation of the history of the region that would portray the age-old struggle of the population for the historic unification into a single Ukrainian Soviet state.[3]

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[1] Amir Weiner, "The Making of a Dominant Myth: The Second World War and the Construction of Political Identities within the Soviet Polity," *Russian Review*, vol. 55, no. 4 (October 1996): 638-660.

This chapter further explores this cultural campaign in Ukraine by examining it through the framework of Western Ukrainian gender perspectives. This chapter looks at the ways in which the new Soviet woman in Western Ukraine was presented, both by men and women, by examining women's magazines, literature, and memoirs. The print media played an important role in the process of creating a new myth and identity for Western Ukrainian women. In this time of not only total war but also of a whole social transformation, the Soviet officials saw it as their duty to educate the people, particularly illiterate and ignorant peasant women, for the purpose of acquiring a public identity as "Soviet women." This chapter first analyzes the artifacts of Soviet propaganda to understand the various messages being communicated to women, and, second, attempts to read how women themselves, in their old age, reflected upon their experiences during these turbulent years by examining their memoirs.

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[2] Konstiantyn Kondratiuk and Ivanna Lychakivs'ka, "Zakhidnokrains'ka intelihentsiia u pershi roky radians'koi vlady (veresen' 1939 – cherven' 1941)," *Visnyk L'vivs'koho universytetu: seriia istorychna*, no. 33 (1998): 178-185; Rubl'ov and Cherchenko, p. 194.

[3] For the postwar Soviet Ukrainian ideological campaign in Western Ukraine, see Serguei Ekeltchik, "History, Culture, and Nationhood under High Stalinism: Soviet Ukraine, 1939-1954," Unpublished Ph.D dissertation (University of Alberta, 2000), Chapter Two.

Women's Magazines as Social Engineers

In the first half of the twentieth century, a women's magazine in Soviet Ukraine took several forms and names until it finally settled on *Radians'ka zhinka* (Soviet Women) in the postwar years.[4] The contents of women's magazines in Ukraine, as in other Soviet women's magazines, consisted of general information on current political events, works of fiction and non-fiction, tips on child care, advice about nutrition and hygiene, cooking recipes, and dressmaking patterns. While the magazines targeted the female population of all of Ukraine, and while most of the content -- items such as child care, hygiene, or non-fiction, for example -- was not specifically "Ukrainian" in nature, some articles did reflect the regional variation in Ukraine. For instance, the Donbas was often quoted as a land of industry and ideal workers. Cooking recipes that usually introduced generic Slavic cuisine sometimes featured "Ukrainian" recipes such as Kievan green borsch or Poltavian borsch.[5]

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[4] A women's magazine in Soviet Ukraine was first published in 1920 under the name of *Komunarka Ukrainy* (1920-1934). Other titles include *Selianka Ukrainy* (1924-1931), *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy* (1926-1941), and *Rabotnitsa i domashniaia khoziaika* (1926-1927). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, *Radians'ka zhinka* was renamed and is published as *Zhinka*.

In accordance with the ideological campaign, the theme of "Western Ukraine" became important in women's magazines too. The magazines *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy* (Kolkhoz woman of Ukraine) and *Radians'ka zhinka*, whose publication period fell in the period of the first Soviet regime in Western Ukraine (1939 – 1941), as well as the second Soviet period in the postwar years (after 1946), served to promote the sense of unification of Ukraine in gender specific ways. Both magazines performed this duty by increasing the number of articles published on women in Western Ukraine.

The women's magazines addressed issues concerning Western Ukraine in several ways: political events involving Western Ukraine, fictional or non-fictional stories about common women's lives, and presentations of the prominent figures in Western Ukrainian society. Several issues of *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy* in late 1939 extensively featured Western Ukraine, ranging from the region's ancient history to the joyous reunion with Eastern Ukraine, and published many "women's voices" at the People's Assembly of Western Ukraine.[6] Once the first stage of the establishment of the Soviet regime was complete, the magazine's focus moved to the "building of a new life," which included giving accounts of people who had benefited from collectivization, new schools, and the Soviet health care system. These articles tended to be written in a typical style: a peasant woman's miserable life under the capitalist Polish landlord had suddenly changed overnight in September 1939.

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[5] *Radians'ka zhinka*, no. 6 (1946), p. 24; no. 11 (1947), p. 25.

[6] *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy*, no. 20 (1939), p. 7; no. 24 (1939), p. 7.

In addition to emphasis on the new way of life, equality of women and men, and the economic modernization occurring under the Soviet state, the press portrayed the Soviet state as a generous supporter of traditional Ukrainian culture. Women in the Hutsul region, a highland region in the Carpathian Mountains, along with their hand-woven textiles and embroidery, were featured in one *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy* issue. The article said that under the Polish regime, the rich treasures of Ukrainian arts were mercilessly trampled and nobody was interested in the preservation of the Ukrainian national culture. But after the Soviet army liberated the region from the Polish state, a school of Hutsul wooden crafts and embroidery, the first of its kind in the history of the Hutsul region, was opened, and the Hutsul women's engagement in their creative work was supported by the state. The women workers gladly manufactured *kylym* (woven fabric) with embroidery that depicted the historic meeting of the Hutsul people and the Soviet Army. These contained, at the top, the face of Stalin and the flag of the Soviet Union, with the caption of, "thank you Great Stalin for the Liberation, from workers in the Hutsul region."[7]

Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy introduced a series of articles about prominent Western Ukrainian intellectuals. First of all, Ivan Franko, "the most distinguished writer in Western Ukraine," was featured in the magazine. The article described his novel *Boryslav Is Laughing,* in which an oil worker strove to achieve a better life and struggled against capitalists. Citing excerpts from Franko's famous poems, *Hymn*

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[7] *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy,* no. 23-24 (1940), pp. 18-19

(Vichnyi revoliutsioner) and *Stone Breakers (Kameniari),* the article explained that Franko's works had been long persecuted by the Polish gendarmerie, but, thanks to the Soviet policy that sponsored Western Ukraine's intellectual heritage, they were finally introduced to the wide mass of the liberated people.[8] In another issue from 1940, the magazine published an article about Markian Shashkevych, one of the first writers in Western Ukraine who wrote in the Ukrainian language.[9] It again stressed that under the Polish regime his works were not published. The ideological importance of the presentation of the Western Ukrainian writers was two-fold: the contents of their literary work and the writers themselves. The press presented the works of Western Ukrainian writers as examples of poor peasant life under the exploitative capitalist regimes. As well, the writers' lives themselves suffered under the alien regime that did not allow "freedom of expression" in their own language. However, thanks to the Soviet Army, these writers were now widely read by many people, in both Western and Eastern Ukraine.

These themes and tone are evident in the way in which Vasyl' Stefanyk was represented in the magazine. This nineteenth century Western Ukrainian writer wrote exclusively about the human anguish and struggles of poor peasants in the course of their village life. From among Stefanyk's many short stories, *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy* chose *News* (*Novyna*), one of his most agonizing pieces, in which the narrative centres upon the problem of "having to choose where no choice is a good one."[10] In *Novyna,* a poor peasant widower Hryts' Letyuchy drowns his younger daughter in the river. While the magazine aptly explained Stefanyk's careful intention that the novella was not about a simple filicide by a bad father but rather a larger story of human anguish resulting from impossibility and despair, this explanation, in turn, gave more credibility to the Soviet claim that the "liberation" of Western Ukraine was undertaken for humanitarian reasons. The underlying message was that under the yoke of the Polish state, even a loving father could not help committing filicide because of the endemic social injustice and poverty. The magazine explained that, "such was the life in Western Ukraine." This miserable life had changed forever when "the Great Soviet people offered their brotherly help to their blood relatives -- workers in Western Ukraine." Once the Soviet Army liberated the Western Ukrainian people, the magazine article concluded, "The future will never return to the time of the uncivilized past, which Stefanyk described."[11]

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[8] *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy,* no. 21 (1939), pp. 10-11.

[9] *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy,* no. 10, (1940), pp. 20-21.

The women's magazine was not only interested in elevating Western Ukrainian intellectuals to the status of all-Ukrainian figures, but also in presenting intellectuals from Eastern Ukraine as concerned citizens worried about the misery in Western Ukraine. On the occasion of the fiftieth birthday and the thirtieth anniversary of the literary activities of Pavlo Tychyna, a Soviet Ukrainian writer and poet, *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy* printed a feature article about him. In an attempt to connect the poet to women's issues, the article introduced an episode in which he became acquainted with a kolkhoz woman in Myrhorod, a city in Eastern Ukraine and wrote the poems, *Songs of a Tractor Driver Woman (Pisni traktorystky)* and *Songs for an Accordion (Pisni pid harmoniiu),* dedicated to her. The magazine also reprinted his little-known poem, *Little Hanna from Western Ukraine (Hannusen'ka iz Zakhidnoi Ukrainy),* in which Western Ukraine was symbolically represented as an orphan reunited with her family.[12]

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[10] D. S. Struk, *A Study of Vasyl' Stefanyk: The Pain at the Heart of Existence* (Littleton, Colorado: Ukrainian Academic Press, 1973), p. 132.

[11] *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy,* no. 2 (1940), pp. 19-20.

The ideological role of women's magazines never decreased in the postwar period. In fact, there was a notable increase in the number of articles dealing with Western Ukraine. *Radians'ka zhinka*, from its first issue in 1946, extensively covered topics concerning Western Ukraine. The party leaders and Central Committee decrees often specified the importance of *Radians'ka zhinka* as an ideological tool and urged the magazine to publish more articles and information about Western Ukraine, including such topics as new political institutions of women's councils and delegate meetings or the kolkhoz system.[13] In addition, the Central Committee Decree on 19 April 1948 that emphasized the importance of women's involvement for the completion of the Fourth Five Year Plan pointed out that *Radians'ka zhinka* should widely publicize working women's participation in kolkhoz and other social organizations.[14] Reflecting such demands, in the late 1940s, *Radians'ka zhinka* began a series of articles "from experience of work with women's councils." In turn, the women's departments in Western Ukraine urged local women activists to subscribe to *Radians'ka zhinka.*[15]

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[12] *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy,* no. 2 (1941), pp. 12-13.

[13] TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 74, spr. 12, ark 17.

[14] *Radians'ka Ukraina*, 23 April 1948, p.1.

It is difficult to assess how many women had access to and read these magazines. A subscription of *Radians'ka zhinka* cost three rubles in 1950. The print-run was of 15,000 throughout the late 1940s, and rose to 50,000 in the 1950s. However, the number of actual readers of the magazine would have been higher as it was usually circulated among several women or stored at libraries. It was also read out for illiterate women at meetings. In fact, a local woman organizer once reported that in her raion a problem arose when twenty-six copies of *Radians'ka zhinka* were circulated only within the raion centre, and kolkhoz women in villages did not have access to the magazine. She therefore had to arrange that subsequent issues be circulated only to villages.[16] This does not necessarily reflect the true popularity of the magazine among Western Ukrainian women; nevertheless, it indicates that despite a possibly higher level of illiteracy in the countryside, or even because of that, the local Soviet organizers had to make an effort to promote the magazine among a female readership.

Feminist Writers in Western Ukraine

From the arrival of the Red Army in Western Ukraine, Soviet cultural ideologues attempted to install the cult of Ivan Franko as a sort of Western Ukrainian counterpart of Taras Shevchenko in Eastern Ukraine by elevating Franko to the status of a revolutionary hero from Western Ukraine and by opening the Franko museum. Given the strong national sentiment in the region, which actually surpassed that present in Eastern Ukraine, the Soviet officials were very careful to separate "bourgeois nationalism" and "Soviet Ukrainian" ideology and to establish the latter. However, Western Ukraine had produced not only strong national consciousness and advocates for Ukraine's independence but also advocates for women's causes, especially Natalia Kobryns'ka and Ol'ha Kobylians'ka, the "first Ukrainian feminists." In the climate of the 1940s, the Soviet authorities in Western Ukraine certainly were not interested in promoting these women as feminists or in attempting to preserve the legacy of interwar women's organizations, but they did not condemn these women outright as "bourgeois feminists." Claiming that theirs was the only country that officially promoted "women's liberation," the Soviet authorities were aware of the need to have a female leader in Western Ukraine equivalent to Alexandra Kollontai in Russia. Particularly in the case of Ol'ha Kobylians'ka, the Soviet authorities were aware of her influence and took advantage of the reputation of these women as long as their achievements did not conflict with the Soviet version of "women's liberation."

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[15] DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 499, ark. 106.

[16] DALO, f. P-3, op. 3, spr. 588, ark. 174.

Radians'ka zhinka featured the hundredth birthday of Natalia Kobryns'ka in 1951. The article mentioned Kobryns'ka's close relationships with Ivan Franko and Mykhailo Kotsiubyns'kyi as well as her great admiration for Engels and Klara Zetkin, and asserted that "her social-literary activities for women were part of the glorious history of the Ukrainian people."[17] No mention was made of her specific efforts to organize women or to establish day care centres in Galicia.

The position of Ol'ha Kobylians'ka, a Ukrainian modernist writer and advocate for women's causes at the turn of the century, was far more important. The writer witnessed the first Soviet regime in her native Bukovyna in June 1940. Though Kobylians'ka was already retired from public activities in her native town because of her age and frail health, the Soviet authorities did not miss the chance to draw upon the last phase of the famous writer's life. Soviet Ukraine's cultural officials organized a celebration of fifty years of her literary activities on 27 November 1940, her seventy-seventh birthday. The event was held both in Kiev and Chernivtsi, at the writer's house, because she was not able to attend the Kiev event. The celebration in Kiev was broadcast by radio across all Ukraine.[18] In contrast to Kobryns'ka, who was better known for her practical activism than her literary achievement, Kobylians'ka's profile was, aptly, first and foremost as a writer, not a feminist activist.[19] The communist party paper in L'viv oblast, *Vil'na Ukraina*, made sure that this latter side of her profile was suppressed as much as possible. Kobylians'ka's involvement in women's organizations was not mentioned, although she was described as having given her "greatest power to the struggle for women's spiritual emancipation, a struggle that was driven by firm and strong courage." *Vil'na Ukraina* also said that Kobylians'ka conducted her fight for women's liberation from their double burden. She fought for the improvement of women's well-being and culture. It did not specify, however, what she did or whether she ever wrote about women's struggles. Her feminist novel, *The Princess (Tsarivna)*, in which a female character suffered gender discrimination and struggled for personal autonomy, was not mentioned. Instead, *The Land* (*Zemlia*), also her best known work, a story of peasant life, was introduced in detail. The newspaper printed a poem dedicated to Kobylians'ka and reprinted a letter by Mykhailo Kotsiubyns'kyi, who was impressed by *The Land,* as well as the positive appraisal by Ivan Franko of Kobylians'ka as "the strongest and most original female talent in Austrian Rus'." [20]

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[17] *Radians'ka zhinka*, no. 6 (1951), p.18.

[18] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 24 November 1940, p. 4.

[19] Although Kobylians'ka is regarded as one of the first Ukrainian feminists and spokeswomen for the Ukrainian women's movement, her withdrawal from the women's movement later in her life made her feminist position more paradoxical. See Maxim Tarnawsky, "Feminism, Modernism, and Ukrainian Women," *Journal of Ukrainian Studies*, vol. 19, no. 2 (Winter 1994): 31-41; Bohachevsky-Chomiak, *Feminists despite Themselves*, p. 108.

Iryna Vil'de, a writer and correspondent of *Vil'na Ukraina* at the time, interviewed Kobylians'ka's niece and asked about the encounter between the writer and the Soviet Army in Bukovyna in 1940. She said that,

> We did not know anything but noticed a panic in the city. The city officials and officers seemed to know that they had to leave Chernivtsi. There was a sense of turmoil or expectation. At the Austrian Square, which is now renamed Red Square, workers gathered for a meeting. They demanded the release of political prisoners….. Then, a Red Army soldier knocked at our house. He made a visit to the writer [Kobylians'ka]. This meeting was touching. Ever since, the house has been swarmed with visitors. [21]

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[20] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 27 November 1940, p. 4.

[21] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 17 November 1940, p. 4.

According to Vil'de's interview, Kobylians'ka said that there was now, upon liberation by the Soviet Army, much Soviet literature available to her and she could enjoy reading. She repeatedly described herself as an old woman who no longer had the energy to write and travel to Kiev or L'viv. Although she was indeed retired from public life, her new readers and admirers in Soviet Ukraine could not leave her alone. Kobylians'ka's neighbours were pleasantly surprised to learn that they had long lived next to the famous Ukrainian writer. They stated that that the writer's house had always been quiet and nobody ever visited, but after the Soviet Army came, the house suddenly became a centre of attention, and there were visitors every day, some with bouquets of white roses, a favourite of the writer. Her house, in what had once been an isolated Romanian countryside, became filled with pilgrims from Kiev. The city officials in Chernivtsi were planning to change the name of "Pans'ka" street to "Kobylians'ka" in honour of the writer. Moreover, school officials discussed changing the name of the local school to Ol'ha Kobylians'ka.[22]

Given Kobylians'ka's age and illness, it is questionable how many of these interviews were actually undertaken with the writer herself. But the importance of propaganda about Kobylians'ka was that she was "alive" at the time. Whether she was retired or sick, the Soviet authorities' decision to allow Kobylians'ka, a survivor of the *fin-de-siècle* Ukrainian literature, to speak out was effective because she was influential and gave more credibility to the Soviet regime than any other Western Ukrainian intellectual. She died in March 1942, shortly after the German invasion. The elevation of Kobylians'ka reached its peak during the postwar period. In 1944, her house in Chernivtsi was converted into a literary-memorial museum in her honour. The museum exhibited her Soviet passport and honorary diploma that were conferred on her at the fiftieth anniversary celebrations.

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[22] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 24 November 1940, p. 4.

Spokeswomen in L'viv

While the existence of Ol'ha Kobylians'ka, even if it was the very last phase of her life, definitely served to justify the Soviet regime in Western Ukraine, she did not in fact produce any work during the Soviet period. Her last literary work was published well before the arrival of the Soviet Army. In contrast, Iryna Vil'de and Wanda Wasilewska, both writers and journalists, were the most active female writers in Soviet Western Ukraine and served as spokeswomen for the regime.

Wanda Wasilewska (1905-1964), a Polish writer and wife of the influential Olexandr Korniichuk, the Ukrainian writer and politician, made her home in the Soviet Union in 1939.[23] Wasilewska's first appearance in *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy* was as a deputy to the Supreme Soviet from L'viv oblast in 1940.[24] She was described as a devoted revolutionary writer who wrote about workers' struggles against the capitalist Polish state. After 1939, she lived in L'viv and undertook a trilogy on peasant life in Volhynia and the liberation of Western Ukraine by the Red Army. Throughout the 1940s, Wasilewska frequently appeared in the Ukrainian press as one of the most famous Soviet writers who dedicated her entire life to fostering social justice and workers' liberation.[25] In one article in 1940, she euphorically expressed the joy of the communist intellectuals in L'viv. Applauding the Soviet Army for providing freedom of expression to the intellectuals of Western Ukraine, she asked, "land is for the peasant, the factory is for the worker, so what is for us intellectuals?" It is "the opportunity to engage in creative work, and this was provided by the Red Army to Western Ukraine, the chance to engage in creative work. The Red Army brought us human dignity, the opportunity to get out of the hopeless grey life, and the opportunity to participate in the great historical process, when a new world, a world of justice and truth, a world of liberated and happy citizens, is being created, built and is flourishing."[26]

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[23] For the activities of the Polish communists and intellectuals, including Wasilewska, who found their home in Soviet L'viv after September 1939, see Marci Shore, "Caviar and Ashes: Warsaw's *Fin-De-Siècle* Generation's Rendevous with Marxism, 1918-1953," Unpublished Ph.D dissertation (Stanford University, 2001), Chapter Four; Bogdan Czaykowski, "Soviet Policies in the Literary Sphere: Their Effects and Implications," in Keith Sword, ed., *The Soviet Takeover of the Polish Eastern Provinces, 1939-1941* (London: Macmillan, 1991): 102-130.

[24] *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy*, no. 7 (1940), p. 6.

Radians'ka zhinka reprinted the excerpt from *Just Love* (*Prosto liubov*), which won her a Stalin prize in 1944.[27] Her 1943 novel *Rainbow (Raiduha)*, which also won the Stalin prize was specifically devoted to fascist atrocities against the Soviet populations, particularly those in Ukraine.[28] In one scene, a woman named Olia was forced to give birth to her first child without any assistance and in front of German soldiers. After the long-awaited birth of her child, the Germans shot the baby and Olia after she declined to reveal the whereabouts of the guerrillas. The ordeal Olia experienced paralleled that of Zoya Kosmodem'yanskaya, a legendary Soviet partisan who was captured, interrogated, and hanged by the Germans as she refused to give any information about partisans.[29] That Germans took photographs of Zoya's execution also parallels the experience of Olia in *Rainbow* when curious Germans watched her labour. Wasilewska's underlying literary motif was that of "raped woman." She employed the representation of woman as the essence of national virtue, which was most violated during wartime. It symbolically represented the purity of the invaded nation. Wasilewska wrote, "…whole Ukraine has been raped, dishonoured, humiliated, trampled underfoot. Her cities were reduced to ruins and the wind blew the ashes of her villages away; the bodies of her sons lay unburied on the snow, or swung from the gallows. The Ukrainian earth was soaking wet with blood and tears."[30] Wasilewska employed the imagery of the raped woman to represent the defiled purity of the invaded nation.

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[25] *Radians'ka Ukraina*, 8 March 1950, p. 3.

[26] *Vil'na Ukraina*, 4 September 1940, p. 4.

[27] *Radians'ka zhinka*, no. 1 (1946), pp. 20-22. For the analysis of Wasilewska's *Just Love* in terms of the postwar Soviet society, see Krylova, "Healers of Wounded Souls: The Crisis of Private Life in Soviet Literature, 1944-1946."

[28] Wanda Wasilewska, *Rainbow*, trans. Edith Bone (London: Hutchinson & CO. LTD, 1943).

Although Wasilewska began her Soviet life in L'viv, her fame as an influential writer soon took her from L'viv to Moscow, and she became one of the most famous writers in the Soviet Union. In contrast to Wasilewska's "all-Union" prominence, Iryna Vil'de (1907-1980) based her activities exclusively in Western Ukraine throughout her life. Her literary activities stretched back to the interwar period in Bukovyna, where she continued the literary tradition of Ol'ha Kobylians'ka and was involved in the women's movement in Kolomyia. She regularly wrote articles for the women's press and discussed a variety of women's issues such as sexuality and aging.[31] After the installment of the Soviet regime, Vil'de became a dedicated Soviet writer, first as a correspondent for *Vil'na Ukraina*, and later as a prominent member of the Writer's Union in L'viv as well as serving as a deputy for the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet from L'viv oblast. Her 1958 novel *The Richyns'ki Sisters* won the Shevchenko award. Her interwar career, however, obviously caused some criticism within Soviet literary circles. Not only her interwar works but also her 1947 novel, *Those From Koval's'ka Street (Ti, z Koval's'koi)* was criticized for its "nationalist element." The accusation went on to declare that her appointment as a deputy for the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet was a "mistake" and labeled her late husband a "nationalist activist."[32]

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[29] Lynne Attwood, *Creating the New Soviet Woman: Women's Magazines as Engineers of Female Identity, 1922-1953* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), pp.139-140.

[30] Wasilewska, *Rainbow*, p. 72.

Nonetheless, Vil'de offered a perfect portfolio as a spokesperson for Soviet gender politics in Western Ukraine. In her short essay entitled "In One's Family" *(V ridnii sim'i)* in *Radians'ka zhinka*, which was intended to propagate new Soviet child care institutions in L'viv, Vil'de gave her short autobiographical sketch.[33] Vil'de wrote about how she benefited from the new Soviet child-care facilities after her husband was killed by the Germans in 1943 and she was left alone with their children. After the Soviet army drove the Germans out of L'viv, she moved back to L'viv, which she described as the "return from the dark underground to the sun." By then in her late thirties, Vil'de was determined "to start my life as a human, mother, writer and as a citizen." The first thing she had to do was to find a place for her children at a children's home. As a mother and a journalist, she visited one of L'viv's new child-care institutions out of curiosity. She was impressed by the clean and bright bedrooms, spacious playroom, sanitary kitchen, and dining room, so that she decided to place her children there. Vil'de also noted that there was no gender-based differentiation in assignment of tasks. She was pleased to see boys engaged in pressing linen, so that sexual equality in education was practiced. By the time she wrote her autobiographical sketch, Vil'de's children had left the institution and currently lived with her, but they still visited the institution on occasion.

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[31] Bohachevsky-Chomiak, *Feminists despite Themselves*, p. 243.

[32] *Kul'turne zhyttia v Ukraini:Zakhidni zemli*, vol. 1, 1939-1950 (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1995), pp. 498-499.

[33] *Radians'ka zhinka*, no. 5 (1946), pp. 19-20.

Vil'de's narrative style was exceptional when compared with her contemporary fellow female deputies or female workers, whose biographical sketches were frequently published in the newspapers and women's magazines. The stories about their lives, written for propaganda purposes, usually followed the typical theme of Western Ukrainian women's lives having changed forever thanks to the great comrade Stalin. All these women shared humble origins and climbed the ladder of promotion, but they generally refrained from speaking about their private life in detail and lacked traces of nurturing and maternal features in particular. This was particularly true for the stakhanovite workers. The life stories of these women, presented in the press, were filled with superfluous praise and appreciation for Stalin and the Soviet state. In contrast, Vil'de, through her own autobiographical sketch, presented herself not only as an admirer and grateful recipient of the Soviet welfare programs but also as one of the common working women. She shared the same daily family problems as many women did at the time. This candid narrative style of "first hand experience" as a common woman would make her a "godmother" figure among young Western Ukrainian intellectuals in the 1960s. While vigorously defending the Ukrainian language and culture to the Party authorities, she provided moral support to the young writers and artists by inviting them to her house.[34]

During the early postwar period, many of Vil'de's heroines were, understandably, new Soviet workers. In short stories such as *Field Team Leader (Lankova)* and *History of One Life (Istoriia odnoho zhyttia)*, Vil'de presented the achievement of Soviet gender policies with a regional focus on Western Ukraine. These heroines, kolkhoz or factory workers, were independent, full of confidence, aware of their own worth, persons in their own right under the Soviet state. The life of Olena Yosypivna, a heroine in *History of One Life*, evolved in retrospect through an interview by a British journalist, Mr. Smith, who came to L'viv to interview women about their attitude towards the Soviet regime, and about how their lives had changed under the Soviet regime.[35] For Olena Yosypivna, a woman who led a hard life under a Polish factory director and the German occupiers, life under the Soviet state was "joyous and better." While almost mocking Mr. Smith, she asked, "what can be my attitude to the power that gave us freedom, work, and the future? What can be my attitude to the power that gave me the biggest joy on earth - being a mother and bringing up my children as a free citizen in the country of socialism?"[36] For a woman who had endured difficult times under the foreign regimes, life under the Soviet regime was nothing short of a paradise. There was no need to even ask such a question. For her, the matter was self-evident and self-explanatory.

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[34] Risch, pp. 122-124.

[35] Iryna Vil'de, "Istoriia odnoho zhyttia," in *Tvory*, 5 vols. (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1968), 5: 97-122.

[36] Vil'de, "Istoriia odnoho zhyttia," p. 122.

While many of Vil'de's heroines were indeed such strong Soviet workers, they were not without problems with respect to their new identities. In short stories such as *Helve (Toporyshche)* and *Tosia (Tosia)*, Vil'de depicted young women's dilemmas regarding the clash of their identities as workers and traditional wives. In *Helve*, the heroine Paraska tells her friend, Mariia, that her husband was reluctant to join the kolkhoz because he was afraid that his wife would play boss. Mariia said that if she were a man, she would not have wanted a wife who did not fulfill her domestic duties.[37]

In *Tosia*, when a young couple married, Petro, an engineer, was surprised that his wife, Tosia, did not leave her work at a pantyhose factory.[38] He earned enough to support the family without Tosia's work, and he was not accustomed to a woman being occupied with anything other than husband and children. Thus he wished his wife would be a housewife just like his mother and grandmother. Knowing Petro's uncomfortable attitudes toward his wife's work, Tosia protested to him, saying "what am I going to do while you are at work? Arrange the house, go to the grocery market, cook food, then what? Then, I am just looking at you?! Sorry, I do not understand this." Petro asked what she would do if they had a child. She answered with confidence, "There is a model child care centre at our factory, but not at your factory." The reference to child care could reflect Vil'de's own experience with child care. Tosia saw no contradictions in her identity as worker and wife. She was not torn between her domestic duties and public duties. She in fact turned out to be a perfect wife and did not abandon her traditional duties. Petro had no complaint. Every day she came home from work earlier than Petro did. She always opened the door to greet Petro before he put the key into the door. Tosia always decorated her window with flowers. However, Tosia still felt uncomfortable with Petro, for whom his wife was not a "comrade." Petro was accustomed to the way in which his father and grandfather treated their partners; they did not share "men's business" with women. The tension between them reached a peak on their first anniversary when Tosia invented an improvement for the machines at her work. Petro, a mechanic, did not understand his wife's work, and asked, "how do I know that you are engaged in such work? I thought you were just a knitter." Tosia rebukes her husband, "Yes, it is strange that my husband is a mechanic and was never interested in my work [....]. This is what it is. You generally did not want to see that I am interested in anything other than the household chores. But what about you? You came home from work, washed your hands, and sat down for supper. Occasionally, you told some anecdote, and then read the newspaper. In the evening, you read books, so days went on..."[39]

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[37] Iryna Vil'de, "Toporyshche," in *Tvory* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1968), 5: 229-234.

[38] Iryna Vil'de, "Tosia," in *Tvory* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1968), 5: 324-331.

Being a working single mother herself, Vil'de would not have any objection to women working outside the home, as she had done before the Soviet power was established. What she questioned was men's attitude toward working women. While women seemed to have established their new gender identities under the Soviet regime, men were still thinking of women solely in terms of the domestic field. Vil'de's description of traditional gender relations prevailing among younger generations may accord with what Vera Dunham has written in her analysis of middlebrow postwar works of fiction. Despite the official proclamation of gender equality throughout the entire period, men were in reality more equal than and superior to women.[40] In addition, Vil'de took into account generational differences in gender relations. The heroine in *Field Team Leader* was fifty-four years old yet was proud of her age and enjoyed her work as a kolkhoz worker.[41] Olena Yosypivna in *History of One Life*, whose age was not exactly known, was clearly not a young woman. Heroines in *Helve* and *Tosia* were obviously younger. The older heroines, non-skilled workers, did not seem to experience problems combining their domestic and public duties. Ironically, for the younger generation with higher education and better prospective careers, women's work outside the home posed a serious family problem. As one of the only female writers who had been engaged in writing throughout the interwar and postwar periods, Vil'de herself definitely belonged to the "older generation." She probably could not overlook the ways in which conventional demands came into conflict with women's new lives, particularly young women, for whom great opportunities for the future were set out by the Soviet government. While focusing on the traditional notions that prevailed among members of the young generation -- those who would constitute the leading force in the building of a socialist economy and society in the new Soviet Western Ukraine -- Vil'de could already sense the neoconservative Stalinist gender politics that had prevailed since the late 1930s in the rest of the USSR and were flowing into Western Ukraine. This led her to express her anxiety for the future of the society.

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[39] Vil'de, "Tosia," p. 330.

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[40] Vera Dunham, *In Stalin's Times: Middleclass Values in Soviet Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), pp. 214-224.

[41] Iryna Vil'de, "Lankova," in *Tvory* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1968), 5: 269-273.

Women's Memoirs

Since the 1990s, historians of the Soviet Union have increasingly drawn on memoirs and oral history. They have made use of the existing collections of oral histories, memoirs, and interviews, many of which were originally published in the Soviet Union during the 1960s and 1970s. During the Khrushchev and Brezhnev eras, in the climate of denunciation of the "cult of personality" and rehabilitation of the purge victims, the founding members of the Soviet Union and Old Bolsheviks had taken the opportunity to tell their turbulent life stories. Many female Bolshevik activists, called *Bolshevichki*, including Nazhezhda Krupskaia, Alexandra Kollontai, and Inessa Armand, who, by the 1970s had already settled into retirement and privileged pension life, also published their memoirs.[42] The style of their memoirs ranged from short autobiographical sketches to full-length autobiographies of the prominent leaders. Their memoirs were undoubtedly dictated by officially sanctioned interpretations of Soviet history. As well, the Soviet women's memoirs focus more on public, rather than private, life. They recalled and structured their lives in terms of great public events, such as revolution, war, and collectivization, rather than such personal events, as marriage and childbirth. This stands in stark contrast to the autobiographies of women in Western countries that focus on private rather than public matters, telling their life stories in relation to their husbands or other males.[43] Bolshevik women's memoirs say very little about their families and it is even difficult to know if the Bolshevik activists were ever married or had children.

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[42] Clements, *Bolshevik Women*, pp. 296-305.

The memoir of Mariia Kikh (1914-1979), the chair of the women's department in L'viv oblast, published in 1979, was one of those Bolshevik memoirs with a particular regional focus.[44] Born into a poor peasant family, Kikh began working as an apprentice to a tailor and quickly became involved in the workers' movement. Kikh recalled her involvement in the revolutionary movement in relation to her struggle with family opposition to her communist activities. After her first experience with a trade union meeting about demonstrations, the young Kikh asked her aunt, "who are these people who go to demonstrations with banners?" The aunt answered, "do not get acquainted with them, they are atheists." Unconvinced by the aunt's reply, Kikh asked her fellow worker if she believed in God. Instead of giving an answer, the friend asked Kikh if she herself believed in God. Kikh, at the time, frequented St. George's Cathedral, but she claimed that she prayed to God simply because her mother had taught her to do so in childhood and that she in fact did not have a strong belief in God. Kikh added that she never turned to God with pleas for help or protection. Gradually, as she became accustomed to going to the workers' meetings, she abandoned her religious practice and belief in miracles.[45] As a party member and, later, a prominent functionary, Kikh was to propagandize atheism among Western Ukrainian women. But her own background as a practicing Greek Catholic was very typical of her generation. On another occasion, when she was already deeply involved in the communist movement, Kikh's mother told her, "do not hide, daughter, please tell me what is bothering you? Those people, whom you are with, could be good people, but they are weaning you from God. For three weeks you did not go to church. People and priests are saying that there is a communist in our home."[46]

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[43] Sheila Fitzpatrick and Yuri Slezkine, eds., *In the Shadow of Revolution: Life Stories of Russian Women from 1917 to the Second World War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 3-17.

[44] M. C. Kikh, *Kraiu mii vozz'iednanyi* (L'viv: Kameniar, 1979).

In accordance with the tradition of the Soviet memoir, Kikh hardly spoke about her private life. There is no reference to her marriage, husband or children, if indeed any of these ever figured in her life. This contrasts sharply with the memoir written by one of her contemporaries, but of a completely opposite political background. Maria Savchyn Pyskir, a Ukrainian nationalist underground guerrilla, wrote her memoir about the underground life during the 1940s after she immigrated to the United States.[47] Belonging to opposing political camps, both women would likely have been offended by any comparison between them. Nonetheless, the comparison of the two women's memoirs illuminates not only differences but also similarities in terms of the ways in which they perceived their extraordinary lives.

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[45] Kikh, p. 10.

[46] Kikh, p. 31.

[47] Maria Savchyn Pyskir, *Thousands of Roads: A Memoir of a Young Women's Life in the Ukrainian Underground during and after World War II* , translated by Ania Savage (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2001).

Born in 1925, Pyskir was eleven years younger than Kikh. Initially working as the OUN's (Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists) courier of correspondence, Pyskir joined the UPA (Ukrainian Insurgent Army) in 1944, and worked as a nurse, intelligence agent, and as a head of the underground Ukrainian Red Cross. Her main narrative evolved around her involvement in the fight for the independence of Ukraine, not her private life. Therefore, Pyskir concentrated her accounts on this part of her life, discussing her personal life only in connection with the partisan movement. Life in a revolutionary movement always overshadows her private life, just as in Kikh's memoir. Yet, unlike Kikh's somewhat impersonal account, Pyskir provided a detailed account of her marriage to a fellow nationalist activist with two children, whom she had to lose in order to stay with the guerrillas. Not only does her narrative reveal a little known female role and life in the Ukrainian nationalist movement, it also alludes to the precarious gender relations existing in the male dominated underground movement. The young, educated Pyskir was smart enough to notice the tension and uneasy attitude towards women not only from male comrades, many of whom were uneducated, but also on the part of her own husband, a leader of a partisan group. She noticed that male partisans were often worried how to treat "educated women" and could not bear the thought that a woman could be regarded as superior to men.[48] She felt that she was not treated equally as a comrade by her husband as he did not allow Pyskir to take part in the decision making process because, in his opinion, she was his wife and she did not contribute to the physical work required of the underground partisans.[49]

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[48] Pyskir, p. 89.

In Kikh's memoir, it is almost impossible to find any evidence that she was particularly concerned with women's issues. The reference to her duty as the chair of the women's department in L'viv oblast only appeared in the last part of the memoir, and in passing. [50] She stressed women's participation and dedication to the collectivization in Western Ukraine, mentioned her fellow active women, and missed some of them who had been killed by enemies, such as Mariia Mat'sko. However, Kikh did not provide any specific information about her work at the women's department. This cursory treatment of women's issues does not necessarily mean she was not interested in the "work among women." However, that work constituted only a part of their entire task of building a socialist society. Like other Bolshevik women's memoirs, the underground communist movement and struggle for the revolution occupied the central place in Kikh's life. Life after these goals were achieved was secondary. There is absolutely no reference, for instance, to her work as a director of the Ivan Franko Museum from 1959 to 1970.[51] Only after they achieved their goals could they reflect upon life in the underground in retrospect. This was particularly true for Pyskir, who while living in the USA under a new name could not tell her story until 1991 when Ukraine finally became independent.

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[49] Pyskir, p. 172.

[50] Kikh, p. 78.

[51] M.A. Orlyk, ed., *Zhinky Ukrainy: biohrafichnyi entsyklopedychnyi slovnyk* (Kyiv: Feniks, 2001), p. 188.

Kikh was involved in the Russophile faction of the former Communist Party of Western Ukraine.[52] She often provided detailed accounts of people whom she encountered such as Kuz'ma Pelekhatyi, Iaroslav Halan, and Wanda Wasilewska. Kikh described Pelekhatyi, a leader of the Russophile faction, as an intelligent and energetic personality with a beautiful voice that fascinated people at the workers' choir. She fondly remembered his choir performance of *International* and Ivan Franko's *Hymn*. Kikh also vividly recollected Wanda Wasilewska's prophetic speech at the demonstration of the Anti-Fascist Congress in L'viv in May 1936. Wasilewska had said, "next year we will meet in Red L'viv." However, Kikh wrote with some disappointment that she actually had to wait another three years for the Soviet regime to arrive at L'viv. While as a communist, Kikh aspired to bring a society in which, regardless of nationality, sex, and class, people could contribute to the society, she occasionally also expressed a strong sense of the Ukrainian identity. She was outraged when, in 1936, she was arrested and the jail officer did not recognize her nationality as "Ukrainian." She said, "did you not know that there is a Ukrainian Soviet Republic?"[53] On another occasion, well after the war, she voiced concern at the plenum of the L'viv obkom that the language of instruction at the Marxism-Leninism University was predominantly Russian. The slogans and posters at many enterprises in which local Ukrainians were hired were also written in Russian. She spoke out for the need to pay more attention to "national form."[54]

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[52] For the Communist Party of Western Ukraine, see Janusz Radziejowski, ***The Communist Party of Western Ukraine, 1919-1929***, trans. Alan Rutkowski (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1983).

[53] Kikh, p. 33.

Kikh remembered with great detail the September 1939 arrival of the Soviet Army in Western Ukraine. In December, she joined L'viv's komsomol (Communist Youth League) as a founding member. For Kikh, the arrival of the Soviet Army was hailed as the equivalent of the October Revolution for the Old Bolsheviks. However, in contrast to many Russian Bolshevik women's memoirs, Kikh's memoir could not have a personal memory about the greatest leader of all Bolsheviks, Lenin.[55] Kikh belonged to a younger generation than the Russian revolutionaries and lived far from Moscow. Her only engagement with Lenin was that she visited the Lenin mausoleum in Moscow in the fall of 1939, as a part of the delegation to the Fifth Session of the Supreme Soviet. Kikh recounted how she and her fellow comrades, particularly, Mariia Soliak, were excited to embark upon their long journey to Moscow.

Mariia Soliak, a rank and file komsomol member, was extensively featured in *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy*.[56] The 1939 magazine article focused on Soliak's delegation to the Supreme Soviet and how she "saw the great Stalin." Soliak told of her excitement at witnessing Stalin: "I saw the great and wise Iosif Vissarionovich Stalin. I could not believe my eyes. It seemed like a dream. So I unintentionally passed my hand over my eyes so that I would wake up from the fairy tale. But no! It was a wonderful reality and I was crying. These were the tears of happiness and joy." It is very probable that Kikh had the same experience as did Soliak, whom she traveled with, and was similarly excited. But Kikh's memoir was written in the 1970s, long after a "cult of personality" was denounced by Stalin's successors, therefore Kikh could not express her memory of the leader she may have personally encountered. Kikh's memoir, however, managed to compensate for this lack of information regarding the great leader with the detailed accounts of fellow rank and file comrades, one of whom she portrayed almost as a martyr figure.

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[54] *Kul'turne zhyttia v Ukraini: Zakhidni zemli* (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1995), vol. 1, 1939-1950, p. 593.

[55] Clements, p. 299.

[56] *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy*, no. 21 (1939), p. 3; no. 23 (1939), p. 15; no. 24 (1939), pp. 12-13.

A recent study of Bolshevik women observes strong parallels between the Bolshevik memoirs and the hagiography of the medieval church.[57] The lives of both Bolshevik women and female saints were recounted as progressions from the world of poverty, injustice, and sin, to a victory or paradise through perpetual devotion and struggle. Both types of women were characterized by modesty, devotion, and submission to higher authority, that of party in the case of the Bolshevik women, and that of God in the case of the saints. While the medieval hagiographers portrayed the female saint as a martyr, demonstrating her virtue by enduring terrible torture and punishment, the Bolshevik did not portray herself as a martyr. This observation partially explains the Bolshevik women's silence about their private life. This analysis is also useful, with some modifications, for the purpose of examining two Ukrainian women's memoirs. Although Pyskir, in her memoir, never attempted to portray herself as a martyr of the Ukrainian nationalist underground, she nevertheless stressed her horrible experience, suffering, and victimization. When the Polish police caught her with her baby at a parish house in Krakow, where she had been hiding, she made a miraculous escape by jumping out of the window to the courtyard, abandoning her baby to the Polish authorities, who was permanently lost to adoption by a Polish official, and whom she never saw again. Several hours later, after the escape, she took a train to Peremyshl, then again encountered the police, searching for her. Pyskir one more time jumped out of a running train into fields of oats, and continued her way to join the comrades.[58] In the following years, she lived under the threat of arrest and death, moving from one hideout to another, often apart from her husband. While living underground, she was usually assigned to cooking and secretarial works. She survived arrest and interrogation. Though a dedicated partisan, the religious upbringing always made her endure guilt and anguish caused by the loss of children (she placed her second son up for adoption, too). By so describing her extraordinary experiences, Pyskir's narrative unwittingly portrays her as a type of martyr figure. Kikh, on the other hand, as a Bolshevik, did not portray herself as a martyr; rather, she did attempt to portray her fellow comrade, Mariia Soliak, as one.

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[57] Clements, p. 301.

Kikh recorded many details of the life of Mariia Soliak. Her life somewhat parallels that of Pyskir. Beginning life as an orphan, the typical characteristic of the Bolshevik revolutionaries in the 1920s, Soliak was married to a fellow revolutionary, and gave birth to her daughter in prison. She too had to leave the children for the sake of the communist movement. *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy* presented Mariia Soliak as a heroine from Western Ukraine, even printing a poem dedicated to her.[59] Just like

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[58] Pyskir, pp. 57-71.

[59] *Kolhospnytsia Ukrainy*, no. 21 (1939), p. 3.

Kikh, who ascended the ladder of promotion in the postwar years, Soliak could have become a prominent leader in the postwar years, but her life was cut short during the war. She was killed by the Germans, by which her martyrdom grew stronger. Kikh grieved the death of her close comrade deeply. She praised the young woman's sacrifice and sagacious insight and devotion for the future of Western Ukraine. Instead of talking about her own sacrifice, which was narrated simply in a "matter-of-fact" style, Kikh presented her comrade as a martyr.

Understandably, in their memoirs both women are circumspect, or almost silent in the case of Kikh, about the violence committed by their respective camps. In addition, both memoirs end with positive expectations for the future of their country. Kikh wrote, "I would like to say, that big wings had grown up for the most oppressed population in the land of Western Ukraine. I am telling this because my own life speaks for itself. I am a peasant daughter who was elected six times to the highest parliament of the republic."[60] She affirmed the might of her native land by referring to the industrialization of Western Ukraine, its oil, manufacture, and efficient transportation system. When Kikh ends her memoir with great expectations for socialism, she refers to Soliak's daughter and grandson, for whom Kikh was pleased that they lived in such a great country as the Soviet Union. She asserts that "the motherland replaced a mother for Iaroslava [Soliak's daughter]."[61] She was pleased that this young generation had great opportunities for the future.

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[60] Kikh, p. 81.

[61] Kikh, p. 81.

Likewise, Pyskir ends with a joyful epilogue upon Ukraine's independence in 1991 and her return to the country. She was pleased that her former partisan husband and other comrades who had survived the Soviet persecutions were then engaged in teaching younger generations at school about the history of the struggle for Ukraine's independence. She expresses great hope for the future generation to create a "really independent Ukraine."[62] Kikh's rosy view for the country's future hid the complex reality of the time: in the 1970s, Ukraine, particularly Western Ukraine, was swept up by the growing dissident movement of that decade. Pyskir was most likely aware of the difficulties of the post-Soviet Ukrainian society, but, like Kikh, refrained from discussing them. For both women, the most important thing in each one's dramatic life was that they had survived extreme circumstances and challenges and had achieved their goals. Despite over twenty years between the publication of their memoirs, both women, although from completely opposite political paths, developed a common feeling of pride and optimism regarding the present and future for their homeland.

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[62] Pyskir, p. 230

Conclusion

The 1940s were a decade of a great turmoil and social upheaval for people in Western Ukraine. The decade witnessed the first Soviet regime in 1939-1941, German occupation in 1941-1944, the second Soviet regime from 1944, and finally the Civil War until the 1950s. These events resulted in massive population losses and dislocation combined with rapid industrialization and agricultural collectivization. The standard of living for most people declined. Women, for the first time in the region's history, experienced extensive, unprecedented modernization, and, as a result, played a significantly larger role in society than they had assumed in previous years.

Nearly thirty years ago, Gregory Massel, in his pioneering study on women in the non-Russian borderlands, argued that the Communist Party in Moscow thought that Muslim women in Central Asia, reputed to be enormously oppressed by traditional Muslim codes of behaviour which kept women veiled and secluded, represented potential allies in the revolutionary cause, and decided to attempt to use them as a "surrogate proletariat."[1] Despite violent resistance, by the end of the 1930s, the Soviet leaders achieved their goal, to a certain degree, and women were much less frequently seen fully veiled. Did the Soviet leadership adopt a similar strategy in Western Ukraine in the 1940s?

In Western Ukraine, the Soviet government, as the liberator of the region from the "yoke of Polish oppression" and "German occupation," launched the "belated" emancipation of women and committed itself to promoting women in all spheres of life, from politics to industry and collectivization. To this end, the Soviet authorities returned to a practice similar to that which it had carried out in the rest of the Soviet Union during the 1920s when it introduced a separate organization specifically targeting women, zhinviddily (zhenotdely), designed to act as a mobilizing force for women in the Sovietization of Western Ukraine. The most important difference between the women's organizations of the 1920s in the Soviet Union and those introduced in Western Ukraine two decades later, however, was that the women's departments in post-war Western Ukraine were not created by the strenuous efforts and initiatives of women themselves, but rather by direct order of the Communist Party. Moreover, the Communist Party was faced with strong rivalry from the Ukrainian nationalists who also sought to recruit women into their underground resistance movement.

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[1] Gregory Massel, *The Surrogate Proletariat: Moslem Women and Revolutionary Strategies in Soviet Central Asia, 1919-1929* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974).

Their work done by women within women's organizations established under the Soviet regime formed an indispensable contribution to the socialist transformation of Western Ukraine, particularly with respect to the completion of the Fourth Five Year Plan. Indeed, women's economic independence eventually became the norm and this grew to be one of the most important Soviet legacies in post-Soviet society. In this respect, the Soviet regime did manage to mobilize women in Western Ukraine for its socialist project. However, the Soviet program of emancipation of women did not proceed as smoothly and straightforwardly as Soviet officials initially expected. In an area containing one of the strongest nationalist movements in Eastern Europe in the twentieth century, the activities of women working in support of the Soviet regime involved many risks and dangerous responsibilities. Many women, whether local or non-local Ukrainians, lost their lives because of their support for the Soviet regime.

The pattern common across much of the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s, which saw the implementation of a proletarian ideology of women's emancipation followed by retrenchment into neoconservative Stalinism, was not experienced in Western Ukraine. Upon the arrival of the Soviets in this region, Soviet authorities merged the two ideologies and sought to impose them simultaneously. Due to the heavy impact of the Second World War, in particular the scale of human loss, the state realized that it simply could not provide adequate social services for its citizens, especially for female workers. Therefore, from the very beginning of the second Soviet regime, instead of providing comprehensive social programs and facilities, the authorities encouraged women's unpaid labour not only at home but in the workplace in a variety of forms such as women's councils and the obshchestvennitsa movement. Moreover, in the hope of offsetting the huge human losses of the war years, the Soviet government launched a massive campaign to encourage women to have more children. This campaign was premised upon their propagation of the idea of women's inherent nurturing nature. These aspects of the Soviet program with regard to women contradicted utopian notions of women's emancipation. This program and its underlying ideology therefore did not liberate women from their patriarchal burden and, fundamentally, did not differ greater from that of the Ukrainian nationalists, who, while recruiting young women for the underground partisan movement nonetheless attempted to limit women's place to that of domestic sphere, under male tutelage.

Regardless of which camp women belonged to, many of them quickly perceived that both ideologies retained a patriarchal nature. Sometimes, women voiced their concerns in various ways, although negative images of women's lives under the Soviet regime were never openly presented in the mass media generated by the state. If women did express their concerns, it took a form, as depicted by Iryna Vil'de, for example, in which women became the allies of the Soviet welfare state, and men consequently lost authority over women's and family affairs. The concerns voiced by so many women did not, however, lead to improvements in their situation and in the end the Soviet state almost completely failed to satisfy its allies (women) with the promised welfare initiatives.

Despite this lack of success by the Soviet power in the area of women's issues, to the extent that women are seen as having benefited from socialism or having acted as the allies of the socialist state, the post-socialist government of Ukraine, as elsewhere in Eastern Europe, today proposes to reshape the nation by eschewing all socialist programs from which women are seen to have benefited and gained some independence and instead emphasizes women's allegedly natural identity as mothers and wives.[2] Thus, one of the ironies here is that the post-socialist government and supporters of traditional Ukrainian values, by attributing essentialized gender roles to women, have constructed their claim of restoring women to their "natural" roles from the very same rhetoric that the Soviet government adopted with respect to women in the 1940s.

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[2] Verdery, *What Was Socialism, and What Comes Next?* p. 82.

In early 1992, shortly after the declaration of independence, the new Ukrainian government introduced the new calendar of official Ukrainian state holidays.[3] While the old Soviet holidays, such as the anniversary of the Great October Revolution (November 7-8) and Soviet Army Day (February 23), were eliminated and new Ukrainian holidays such as Christmas (January 7-8) and Independence Day (August 24) were introduced, International Women's Day (March 8) remained a holiday along with May Day (May 1) and Victory Day (May 9). Though some strongly oppose the continuation the Women's Day holiday as a relic of Soviet imposition and duplicitous political rhetoric and having little to do with the idea of women's liberation, others accept it as a day of recognition of the unique status of women.[4] Unlike the controversy surrounding the Victory Day, in which veterans of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists who had fought for Ukrainian independence during the war demanded that their sacrifices be equally recognized with those of Soviet veterans,[5] to date there seems to be no serious debate over the continuation of the celebration of International Women's Day, and the holiday is in fact still celebrated in most former Soviet republics.

Recently, Ukraine introduced Mother's Day (the second Sunday in May), a holiday to celebrate mothers, which has contributed to making the first two weeks of May entirely holidays due to the extremely late Orthodox Easter (May 2 in 2003).

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[3] Catherine Wanner, *Burden of Dreams: History and Identity in Post-Soviet Ukraine* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), pp. 150-151.

[4] Bohachevsky-Chomiak, "Women in Ukraine: The Political Potential of Community Organization," p. 43.

[5] Wanner, pp. 160-164.

While the introduction of Mother's Day may simply be a way of importing capitalist culture and Westernization (both Mother's Day and International Women's Day in fact originated in the United States), the juxtaposition of the two holidays dedicated to women symbolizes the hybridism of women's status in post-Soviet Ukraine. On the one hand, Ukrainian women are held in high regard for their independent status that was strenuously achieved by previous generations. On the other hand, attempts by the contemporary anti-socialist Ukrainian government to eradicate the socialist legacies by introducing a new holiday fit perfectly with the nationalist political discourse, which attributes to women an allegedly timeless maternal role which extends to encompass the responsibility of being both the biological and symbolic reproducers of the nation.[6]

In this light, the contents of the May 2000 edition of the magazine *Zhinka*, formerly known as *Radians'ka zhinka*, do not seem particularly unusual. In it, one article dedicated to female war veterans, who, as gunners in the Soviet Army, fought in the Great Patriotic War, lies beside another article that is dedicated to Mother's Day which argues that Ukrainian women's maternal nature evolved out of ancient Ukrainian historical mythology. At first glance, these two images of women appear contradictory. However, as this thesis has revealed, the combination of the two very different discourses concerning the role of women has been an integral facet of

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[6] Marian J. Rubchak, "Christian Virgin or Pagan Goddess: Feminism versus the Eternally Feminine in Ukraine," in *Women in Russia and Ukraine*, pp. 315-330.

Western Ukrainian, and today Ukrainian, society since they were introduced simultaneously in the Soviet era.[7]

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[7] *Zhinka*, no. 5 (2000), pp. 1-2.

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